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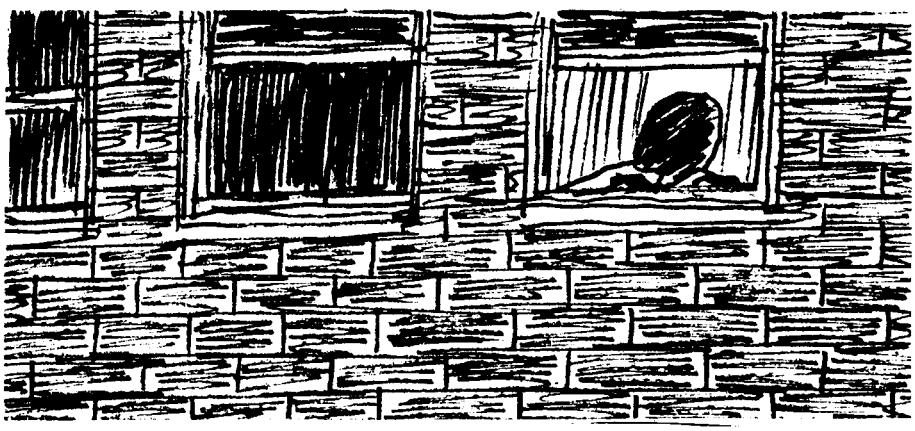

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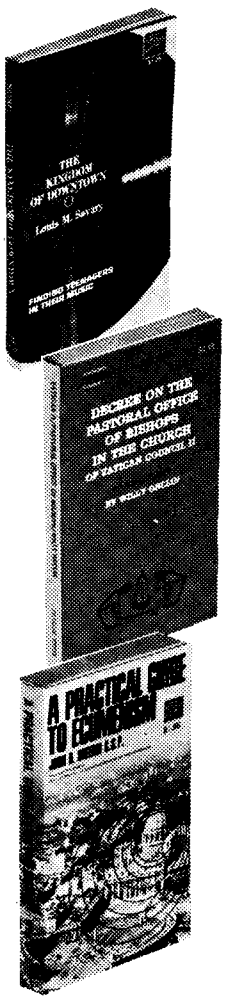

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NEWS AND VIEWS

James McCracken, executive director of the National Council of Churches' Church World Service, articulated what should be the shared concern of all volunteer relief agencies working in Vietnam, including Catholic Relief Services, when he testified recently before the Senate subcommittee investigating problems concerned with refugees and escapees.

Mr. McCracken urged that volunteer relief groups be free to keep their functions distinct from government programs. He noted that when the U.S. AID Office of Civilian Operations was placed under General Westmoreland and the Army, "there developed an increasing misunderstanding of the role and the character of the private voluntary agency." Agency work was made a minor part of the pacification program, priority was lost, and agency programs took on the appearance of being an extension of the military's efforts.

This, of course, has been the fate of Catholic Relief Services in Vietnam. But if CRS is troubled over the matter, it did not show so far as the subcommittee hearings were concerned. A spokesman in the office of subcommittee chairman Senator Edward M. Kennedy declared at October's end that CRS had not volunteered or requested to testify.

In this general context, Catholic Peace Fellowship is anxious that its recent statement in *The National Catholic Reporter*, questioning CRS policy, be understood as a positive expression of interest in CRS's mission.

In a letter to Bishop Edward E. Swanstrom, CRS executive director, James H. Forest, Fellowship co-chairman, stressed "our hope that the CPF concern will not simply engender animosity, as —contrary to some opinions—neither we nor the statement's signers are motivated by ill will. Quite the opposite."

Forest also expressed the hope that "in the weeks or months ahead, there will be an opportunity for a gathering of CRS staff and some of the statement's signers to discuss the difficulties which presently exist, and the opportunities for constructive renovation which might be given consideration."

•

Reliable reports out of Rome have sentiment in the Vatican Secretariat of State being solidly anti-U.S. with respect to the war in Vietnam. On more than one occasion, these reports say, the Vatican has been close to issuing an outright condemnation of American prosecution of the war, but has not for reasons of state.

How long the Vatican will continue to hold back no one knows. But Vaticanologists say it can't be much longer, if the papacy is to escape a new charge of abdication of moral responsibility.

An essay in the October *Herder Correspondence* sums up the challenge: "Catholic doctrine on international relations and international law (is) in a crucial transitional stage," in which "the Church must abandon its anemic policy of perpetually suspending judgment on international wars, and its tolerance of inter-Christian warfare."

•

My Brother's Keeper Dept.:

A Fordham Jesuit, in arguing the advantages of business attire for priests, remarked that one day, while in clerical garb, he was approached by panhandlers six times in as many blocks in midtown Manhattan. "The clergy," he commented, "is a sitting duck for panhandlers and drunks in subways and on the street."

•

Great annoyance in the Diocese of Albany over the "Clergy and Religious Teacher Survey" that has gone out from the office of Superintendent of Schools Father Thomas J. Maloney, inquiring into details ranging from professional background to general health.

Sample questions: "What professional periodicals do you read regularly? How much time have you lost from work or studies because of personal illness during the last three years? Have you ever had a nervous breakdown?"

One religious remarked: "The questionnaire asked everything but whether we indulge in sex fantasies."

The big irritant, however, and the thing that triggered several letters of protest to Father Maloney, was the penalty clause to which clergy and religious teachers were required to fix their signature: "I hereby certify that the information presented on this form is true, accurate and complete. Any falsification will be sufficient cause for disqualification or dismissal."

Two objections to the clause: it displayed a lack of trust toward the teachers; it failed to treat them as Christian adults.

•

Anti-Communism continues in the American experience to be a kind of Frankenstein, as capable of destroying the ideals of justice and freedom as the totalitarianism it sets out to combat. Not only in Vietnam but more recently in Greece, once a favorite recipient of American anti-Communist aid, anti-Communism has become a monstrous thing, one reason being that little attention is paid to the means used to wage the "holy war."

Thus a *Commonweal* contributor, whose Greek wife recently succeeded in escaping from her homeland, writes: "Each day brings news of a friend or acquaintance jailed and tortured . . . The [Junta] government has refused the International Red Cross access to any of the prisons or concentration camps . . . One is not allowed to aid families if one of their members has been imprisoned . . . There are so many tragic cases, but one is told, with that persistent metaphor that ought to be banned from all political discussion, 'You can't make an omelet without breaking eggs.' As usual it is the liberal consciences that are put in prison . . ."

In the midst of the Greek travesties, the American Government is strangely silent. And from the Christians, so stalwart in fighting Communist dictatorships, not a word. JOHN DEEDY

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CORRESPONDENCE

Draft Resistance

Cambridge, Mass.

To the Editors: I was deeply pleased to read your endorsement of the statement by the 26 Catholic intellectuals calling for civil disobedience by Christians and Christian churches to end the war (Oct. 27). I would like to describe a religious service I recently participated in to indicate how Christians can go about this.

During a service on Oct. 16 in the Arlington Street Church in Boston (Unitarian-Universalist), 281 young men burned their draft cards in the light of the altar candle or handed them to the clergyman of their choice for delivery to the Justice Department. This was part of the nationwide birth of the Resistance, a movement to end the draft, end the war, and thus restore some degree of decency and honor to the conduct of this nation. Many of the members of the Resistance are men of prime draft age; others of us are (or were) practically exempt from the draft, but thought it dishonorable and cowardly to let the youngest face the government alone. There has been a remarkable response from seminarians, ministers and priests: over 100 of the 1,000 members of the Resistance at this date come from this category . . .

We in the Resistance have little interest in moral protest for its own sake. We have no political or moral position as a group. Each of us has individually decided that we are ready to take risks to end a war we loathe, and we want our actions to be practically effective in doing so. For that purpose, our present number is far too small. In effect, we are making a wager. We are betting that there are tens of thousands of decent, honorable Americans who will join us to make this stand here and now. We are betting, with five years of our lives at stake, that so many Americans will join us that the government will be forced to back down from the confrontation.

We in the U.S. can rely on no *deus*

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THE McCARTHY CANDIDACY

Senator Eugene McCarthy's announcement that he is seriously weighing the possibility of running against Lyndon Johnson in some selected primaries has injected new life into an already lively and growing anti-Johnson movement among dissentient Democrats. Doubtless the movement has reached the point where a candidate is necessary, but it is an indication of the strength of the "dump-LBJ" forces that a Senator as respected as McCarthy has emerged as the serious contender. His candidacy is testimony not only to how serious the split really is within the country over the war, but is a record of how serious has been the failure of Johnson to retain his most loyal supporters of only a few years ago. Fewer and fewer are those who concur with William Shannon (page 196) that Johnson, Rusk and McNamara are actually "responsible centrists" bravely restraining the true hawks and the potential Bill of Rights repealers. Indeed, even were Johnson to negotiate an end to the war tomorrow, there would remain, for many, ample reason for his replacement in 1968 on grounds of their disillusionment with his disregard for certain elementary tenets of political ethics and responsibility. His most flagrant culpability rests with his pursuance of the war, which has more and more crippled meaningful domestic reform. Not only is the vaunted war on poverty in a shambles, but the reactionary Republicans continue their ascendancy thanks to the sundering of the Democrats; not so strangely, Everett Dirksen has become the *de facto* Senate Majority Leader. Johnson has in fact despoiled his own party and has been responsible through his imperiousness for the very emergence of the Dissident Democrats, a massive liberal backlash of men whose ideals are being destroyed in a Vietnam grinder.

Eugene McCarthy's candidacy cannot be dismissed, as the White House has tried to, as the product of a disgruntled vice-presidential hopeful of 1964. A man highly esteemed in the Senate, he has been consistently the voice of sober reflection, coolness and integrity. While his position on the war veers between the Gavin enclave theory and advocating a stronger U.N. role, he

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nevertheless has registered profound disquiet over the very idea of our involvement in Vietnam. His voting record has been impressive throughout his tenure, while his books, though sketchy, do reveal a man of conscience thoroughly familiar with the vagaries of international relations.

His latest book, *The Limits of Power*, which ironically delineates the limits of other nations' power, is another in the Fulbright *genre*, critical of American shortcomings, anxious to propel American policy toward a fulfillment of its more justifiable commitments. A subdued work, the book suffers from the author's self-imposed limitations, but nevertheless unveils a man profoundly upset at the drift of this country into brutalizing contortions. A hitherto ignored point which McCarthy makes in an understatement which accentuates its ominousness is that "on at least two occasions the U.S. State Department has acknowledged 'accidentally' bombing villages across the border in southern China." (page 228)

But finally one concludes that the single greatest contribution McCarthy could make as a candidate would be to raise the level of our political discourse. What he offers is not only the possibility of a way out of Vietnam, but the chance for a remaking of a system where obfuscation and deceit have become the daily ration of a government to its people. And he has offered his fellow Democrats the possibility of registering their dissent without having to bolt to third party "politics of gesture."

JESUS

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Next week's issue—*Commonweal Papers II*—will be devoted entirely to the problem of Jesus. Even larger and more comprehensive than our first Commonweal Paper on God, this issue will include as contributors: Avery Dulles, Thomas Clarke, James Douglass, Raymond E. Brown, Charles E. Curran, Frederick Crowe, J. M. Cameron, Bernard Cooke and William Hamilton. Advance bulk orders for this issue are invited.

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The CAIP
What Is Its Future?

Washington

John Courtney Murray last June urged that discussion of the issue of selective conscientious objection be kept distinct from that of the justice of the South Vietnam war. The Catholic Association for International Peace at its 40th annual conference grappled with the question: "Selective Conscientious Objection in an Age of Conflict." The meeting was, in the words of Princeton's Professor Paul Ramsey, "a tribute, in a certain sense," to Father Murray. The distinctions he appealed for were sometimes blurred, however.

The CAIP band of brothers was unhappily few. Drawn mostly from the academic community, each brought his own outlook as well as his discipline's. Only on two points did the participants seem at one—in a general sympathy with the position of the selective objector, and in recognizing as a political reality that United States policy on SCO will not be changed while the nation is at war.

William V. O'Brien, professor of government at Georgetown and who as CAIP president put the conference together, brought its formal discussions to a close with the assertion that the "selective" part of SCO is a smokescreen. The real issue is conscientious objection per se, he said, because it is not a question of selective war, but of modern war.

As to THE war, Wilson Carey McWilliams of Brooklyn College suggested that one purpose of the Administration's intervention is to demonstrate that wars of national liberation are not the solution. He held that the opposite is true, because the war has aroused such opposition within the country that the U.S. won't be able to undertake such an action again.

Nobody was at all sanguine about the war. In the discussion, however, surprising assessments of some aspects of Administration policy came forth. Dr. Ernest A. Lefever of the Brookings Institution had an accolade for federal openness. Two of the more caustic voices at the conference—Professor McWilliams and Father Daniel Maguire, Catholic University moral theologian—had related comments. McWilliams held that there is cause for optimism because the Administration conducting the war "is a liberal one which has remained liberal." Maguire said that "we are getting the news on Vietnam," and therefore the people can make decisions about it for themselves. Maguire had asserted earlier that Americans aren't ready "to give up the goal of making the world safe for democracy, or at least safe for the American tourist." In such a situation, he said, selective conscientious objection has an educative and prophetic value.

McWilliams and *Worldview* editor James Finn de-

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fended demonstrations. The former, however, ridiculed "pacifists" who speak out for the revolutionary ways of Che Guevara.

The CAIP's traditional peace award luncheon was one "in memory" of Courtney Murray. That memory was evoked—incisively, beautifully—by Father Murray's long-time Woodstock colleague, Walter Burghardt, S.J. Murray's basic legacy, said his friend, is that "he inserted the Catholic Church into history." Murray's task was to show the reality that man's quest for understanding is not static and unchanging. "He more than any single individual helped move Catholicism away from classicism and into historical consciousness." This was the most significant struggle of Vatican II, according to Father Burghardt, who said that the result of the Council is that historical consciousness "will be Catholicism's irreversible future."

He cited Murray's evaluation of the birth control issue as an illustration of the Church caught in transition from classicism to historical consciousness. Murray's view, he recalled, was that "the Church reached for too much certainty too soon, and went too far." On the approach to SCO, Father Burghardt said that the Murray call, as always, was for rational discourse.

Father Burghardt closed by offering the CAIP this "comforting thought" of John Murray: "The contemporary Catholic, like the bishops in council, must pass through a period of tension and crisis, but can expect to emerge with a certain measure of light and of joy."

The CAIP has not sought comfort. It is not under acute tension. The scant attendance at this year's conference points to a crisis in determining its future. The future agreed on is to search the SCO issue more deeply, and to seek out contemporary nuances of the Just War theory. In rational discourse, always.

PAUL W. McCLOSKEY

(Paul W. McCloskey is a veteran of the Washington press corps.)

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FROM PROTEST TO RESISTANCE

MUSINGS FROM BALTIMORE CITY JAIL

"They're killin' us with kindness." Obviously they were. True, we encountered signs of contempt and fury at what we had done—draft board personnel flinging back at us the New Testament given them following our action, a police photographer miserable with his anger, slamming his camera case about, discreet hisses of "sick" and "ridiculous" from U.S. Marshals.

Nonetheless, kindness was the rule. That vast abstraction called the "system" was adjusting to us. This was no time to fight us, and it could not join us—it would rather work patiently and steadfastly to have us rejoin it. Later, it would have more cards and would treat us as it willed. Now was the time to buy us with sweets, to dull us in security and a sense of false triumph, to blunt the edges of our protest with civilized tolerance.

And so, people studied us with combined curiosity and pity, as animals trapped by their own foolishness. F.B.I. agents treated us with studied and dedicated courtesy. The Federal Commissioner wheedled us with a recognizance bond of $1,000. The warden of Baltimore City Jail put us in the infirmary whose spare fixtures were none the less comfortable and clean. Nurses, inmates, visitors fought to comprehend the added nonsense of our fast. Somehow, their attitude said, you have slipped from your slot, let us help you find your place again.

People were sometimes absurd, sometimes incongruous, as people often are. The draft secretaries screamed at us, and one woman, with a misdirected courage, barred the exit following our bloodpouring on the files. (We had planned to wait for arrest.) We had feared grievously for their hysteria, and had thought that panic among them might well sponsor injury. But order restored; and the police in charge, several secretaries returned to their desks, there to ponder us with white faces and anxious eyes. Later, in the U.S. Marshal's jail, we were caged with a black man on a "bum rap" of 15 years. He was appealing his case, and prepared himself on his knees, praying audibly. A Negro marshal, of the devoutly Catholic type found in Creole New Orleans, saw me, and in pain muttered, "I never thought I'd see it happen."

To be sure, my identity and role cause bewilderment and misgiving—not just to Catholics, but to very nearly everyone. They watch me closely for signs of insanity or idiosyncrasy. They would be profoundly relieved if I fell upon the floor laughing wildly, or took running starts headfirst into the wall. But when I prove that I am a nice guy, calm and in my wits, they conclude that my hang-up is circumstantial. I have a "thing" on draft files.

Yet I'm a priest, so the misgivings remain. What do they expect from me? Assuredly to tell them that things are right and secure—that present disturbances are temporary and marginal; that the Church really tells what is right and wrong; that God favors our mythologies as true and real. To be a priest is to rationalize the peeling veneer of Americanism; to assure people that it is essentially moral and *best*, and that time and luck will prove this country right. Deportment and role call for this, namely God and country on country's terms.

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Yet I have not done this, and there's the rub. By a swift and irrational action, role and theology are left suspended, and a lot of people with them. Is this good? How is one to know? It seems a condition offering more hope than the present, stylized death. Once again attitudes slip into simple pleasantries—I am unsettled about this war, or, I have access to totems that most priests aren't talking about.

Tom Lewis (a fine artist and friend who is here with me) observed yesterday that there was more living death in those draft offices than here in jail. It is, I think, an apt observation. At the Customs House, officials curry the files as a groom does a race horse; they are housed and protected better than the poor; yet secretaries and folders have this in common—they are the first gears in the machinery of killing and death. The young men behind the hideous simplicity of paper and file cabinet have little choice but to climb into the gear box and help drive the wheels. One should be surprised if the secretaries did not fling back the Gospels.

Here one encounters active interest, friendliness and understanding from the inmates (mostly black). They tell of exorbitant sentences and delayed trials, of no counsel and no money. There is no other language to use since they do not realize that whatever they have done, be it addiction, burglary or assault, it is part of the immemorial protest of blacks against a society which is powerless to accept them as people. Before, protest was fasting, malingering or the terrible vengeance of Nat Turner. Today it is crime, James Johnson (one of the Ft. Hood three), Carmichael, Newark and Detroit.

So we protest together—if only we had more time to tell the brothers this. For a country which cannot welcome its black people, cannot leave the Vietnamese alone, cannot temper overseas economic greed, cannot but slide from the Bomb to the ABM systems, cannot but talk of law and order. Such premises have a certain fluidity and dependence, one does not buy one of them without buying all.

The chaplain has just brought in press reports. We are surprised by the furor we have caused, and by the honesty of both the *Times* and the *Sun* accounts. Press manipulation of the Washington Mobilization is too fresh in mind to offer us other than an ambiguous and puzzling contrast. Perhaps the audacity of our action has a disarming effect, perhaps our waiting for arrest and present fast has helped. But most of all, I suspect, the Lord has once again suggested his dominion through a frightened and vulnerable little handful of peace people, who are more afraid of dishonesty, injustice and murder than they are of insecurity and condemnation.

The bread is rising—it's an old French Revolution slogan. And people are moving from dissent to resistance. Torres and Guevara and Malcolm X may be dead, but they have done their good (or harm, if you will). But one thing is getting clearer—people must have the power to be people, or they will seize it. Either case can well be called revolution. PHILIP BERRIGAN

(Father Philip Berrigan, S.S.J., a Josephite priest active in civil rights and the peace movement, was recently arrested for pouring blood into the government's draft files in Baltimore.)

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NATIONAL AFFAIRS

STILL TIME FOR POLITICS

As readers of my articles in these pages know, I have a more favorable view of President Johnson and of his conduct of the Vietnam War than do the magazine's editors. But it has always been one of the glories of *Commonweal* that, although it often takes strong positions, it imposes no party line on contributors and remains hospitable to vigorous disagreement.

It is the quality of that disagreement as expressed in these pages and in the nation that I wish to discuss. To me, there is a more important issue before the nation than Vietnam, important as that is. That larger issue is the character of the national debate and the forms which dissent takes. I see on all sides a growing impatience with politics, a rising shrillness and a refusal to abide by the common courtesies of civil discourse. There is instead a preference for direct action, for romantic moral gestures, and even a sneaking taste for violence.

We seem to forget that civilization is a fragile achievement and that self-government, political freedoms, and the rule of law are rare and precious accomplishments. They are made possible by a shared conviction that reason should prevail, that compromises are necessary, and that we should have a decent respect for one another's opinions. In many old and civilized societies, the participants in the political drama have abandoned these crucial restraints only to discover, to their lasting dismay, that the curtain was soon permanently lowered. That was what happened in Russia 50 years ago this month, and in Germany in 1933. Similarly, Salazar in Portugal and Franco in Spain put democracy to death because the various contending parties lacked the charity and common sense to make self-government work. The U. S. has not reached that parlous stage as yet, but we cannot be certain that it will escape the fate of other societies.

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There are powerful reactionary forces in this country. There are members of the Senate Judiciary Committee who would gladly repeal most of the Bill of Rights. There are sober, respectable citizens who pay money to organizations seeking to overthrow the Supreme Court, restore racial segregation, and smash trade unions. The governor of California, the nation's largest state, believes the rioting Negroes are "mad dogs," and everyone knows what society does to mad dogs.

It is against this background that I view Lyndon Johnson, Dean Rusk, and Robert McNamara as responsible centrists. They are striving to serve the nation as best they can in a complicated, difficult situation. They certainly can be charged with mistakes of judgment and failures of insight, but at the very worst, history will only find them guilty of errors, not of crimes.

But of late, critics have moved from disagreeing with Mr. Johnson to hating him. A demonology is being invented. Yet, in fact, there are no devils in high places in Washington; there are only tired, worried, conscientious men. When they defend their judgments and policies, they find their motives impugned and their serious arguments derided. (It is true that on their side, they scold their critics and sometimes wave the flag). *Commonweal* has begun to join in this hooting and jeering. I read Secretary Rusk's statement on China at his October 12 press conference as an interesting, thoughtful expression of one viewpoint on Asia. It is a view that can be rebutted but it cannot be dismissed out of hand.

Commonweal, however, instead of writing the kind of reasoned, incisive commentary that befits its traditions, offered invective. ("Up From Dominoes," Oct. 27). Rusk was accused of rewriting history "with Orwellian swiftness," invoking the "yellow peril," and "prescribing preventive wars,"—none of which I could find expressed in Rusk's remarks or documented in *Commonweal*'s editorial. He was also characterized as "rabid," "simple-minded," and guilty of "myopia" and "quintessential vacuity."

Rusk's liberal critics were dismissed for their "neurotic anti-Communism" and "paranoiac liberalism" which, the editorial asserted, were partly responsible for his "diatribes."

Why all this verbal frenzy? Is no tone of voice possible except a scream? This was not the tone of the *Commonweal* for which I started writing in 1953. In those days, we took it for granted that only McCarthyites discussed public questions in this style.

No one could quarrel with the tone of the second editorial in that same issue ("The Escalation of Dissent") or with the seriousness of the two statements it discusses. One is the anti-war declaration put forward by the new organization, RESIST, and the other is the anti-war statement issued by leading Catholic intellectuals. But leaving aside for another time the issues raised by these two statements, I would dissent from their political premise. This premise is well-stated in the editorial: "The escalation of dissent . . . is a natural consequence both of the failure of the peace movement to achieve ends through ordinary political techniques, and of frustration that comes from being ignored or, on occasions when notice is taken, of being sneered at."

This may be a "natural consequence," but it is not a wise one. Looking at the political effects of the peace movement's efforts over the past two and one-half years (since U.S. troops entered the war in a large way), I would say that those effects have been most impressive. The peace advocates have not changed President Johnson's mind and have not forced him out of office, but given the character of the man and the fixed tenure of the presidential office, these were never attainable. But consider these other achievements: peace candidates made a respectable showing in several Democratic primaries in 1966, dissatisfaction with the war contributed to the size of the Republican gain in that congressional election, leading members of both parties in Congress are now on record against the Administration's management of the war, Governor George Romney and Senator Charles Percy, two Republican presidential prospects, are edging toward a peace position, anti-war sentiment as reflected in public opinion polls has doubled, and now President Johnson, who won an enormous victory three years ago, stands in serious danger of defeat if he runs for re-election.

In view of all these facts, I find it difficult to understand the peace advocates' impatience with politics. What miracles of instant politics were they anticipating? The war, of course, goes on, but it may well be that Ho Chi Minh is now not prepared to enter into a serious negotiation until the November, 1968 elections have been held. It is reasonable to suppose that he is hoping for the election of an American Mendes-France, pledged to end the war on almost any terms.

Since the election of this kind of candidate is also the objective of many, though not all, peace advocates, they should concentrate more, not less, on politics. Because of President Johnson's hold on the levers of power in his own party, such a candidate can only be a Republican. The range of choice is narrow but there are discernible, important differences in temperament and approach between, say, Romney and Reagan.

Storming the Pentagon, barricading CIA recruiters in the dean's office, and inflaming an already envenomed national debate can only strengthen the forces of reaction who would gladly use the war as an excuse to crack down on pacifists, rebellious students, Negroes, and all other disturbers of the peace. If the war is to be ended without doing grievous damage to the fabric of democracy, those who cherish peace must not give way to rancor or vilification or violence. Reasoned argument and peaceful politics remain the last best hopes of all of us.

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

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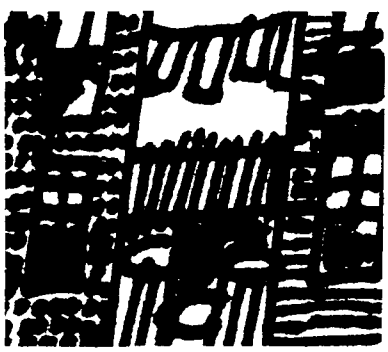
THE GHETTO LAWYER

An unthinkable luxury for the destitute

JAMES J. GRAHAM



The recent controversy in New York City over the proper formula for dispensing free legal services to indigents under the Economic Opportunity Act reflects a more fundamental misconception of the role of the lawyer, generally, in modern America. Those who advocate strict adherence to the hallowed Canons of Ethics of the profession seem to be indulging in the romantic notion that today the successful practitioner, like "Honest Abe" Lincoln or the hero of "Anatomy of a Murder," earns his income by reading the law far into the night, until he finds that elusive case in point.

This image certainly is out of focus in the light of current legal practice but it probably never coincided with reality. Lincoln, we know, went on to become a politician and the presidential candidate of big businessmen. The late Perry Miller in his brilliant volume, *Life of the Mind in America,* pointed out that the profession has come a long way in the last hundred years. Toward the middle of the nineteenth century, lawyers were still considered by rich and poor alike as a rather grubby lot; the public saw them as unlearned technicians who charged fees that were highly disproportionate to the services rendered.

According to Miller, David Dudley Field and other leaders of the Bar managed before 1900 to refurbish the image by consciously identifying the best impulses of the legal profession with the American version of the Christian Way of Life. Shysters and mediocre practitioners, of course, would continue to be part of the legal community but, in terms of influence, always on its outer edges. An Establishment, composed, as they say, of the best people in government and in the better firms, from that time to this has dominated all meaningful expressions of the organized Bar.

Needless to say, such expressions invariably have been conservative in tone. For example, those seeking a historical origin for the dependency "trauma" that afflicts generations of welfare recipients need only look to a classic decision in 1875 in Kansas by Field's nephew, David Brewer. Brewer held that though relief of paupers was a Christian obligation binding on the state, only the utterly destitute, i.e. the hopeless, could qualify.

Spokesmen for the legal establishment at the turn of the century, including Brewer, who became a Justice of the United States Supreme Court, invested the judiciary with the protection of natural law property rights as its divine mission. It was not until 1932 that the patrician, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, no radical himself, channeled a populist upheaval into a progressive stream of legislative social reforms that has continued to the present time despite the intermittent opposition or misgivings of the organized Bar.

Perhaps the most complete delineation of the role of the practicing lawyer as a non-involved, stabilizing influence in the community appeared in a decision relating to the New York controversy in November, 1966, by the Appellate Division of the State Supreme Court. The Court in *Matter of Community Action Legal Services, Inc.* (CALS), with the active encouragement of the city's bar associations, "regrettably" rejected proposals for legal services corporations to be financed under the EOA.

There were admittedly technical deficiencies in the papers submitted for approval; for example, the Court found that the petitions did not unequivocally prohibit the lawyers for the poor from engaging in what the Court described as "political, lobbying and propagandistic activity." But the Court in *CALS* expressed disapproval in large part be-

JAMES J. GRAHAM *is an attorney with the Project on Social Law of the New York University School of Law.*

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cause the operating schema called for "indiscriminately mingling social goals and legitimate legal practice." Said the Court, "It would be one thing to allow neighborhood law offices to handle poor men's credit unions. It would be quite another thing to have them handle, advise and represent political factions or organizations of social and economic protest however worthy."

The Appellate Division also echoed the assurances of the bar associations that its principal concern was to make certain the poor would receive the best available legal services. Consequently, the Court ordered the city to promptly resubmit corrected petitions; but, since the subsequent failure of the city and Office of Economic Opportunity officials and representatives of the Bar to reach agreement on new submissions had cost the poor $10,000 per day, or $3-million for the fiscal year, in federal monies, they probably have a right to question the sincerity of all the protagonists.

More important to the future course of legal services, to this day no one seems to know precisely what conduct the judges intended to proscribe. Were rent strikers or those arrested for sitting-in at welfare centers to be denied representation? The tone of the decision suggested that the Court believed it had a sacred trust to protect an attorney-client relationship that is incompatible both with the legal needs of the poor and with much of present-day practice.

If the Court's narrow view of the role of the ghetto lawyer (another double standard?) prevents him from engaging in traditional "non-legal" functions performed by attorneys representing large corporations, labor unions and landlords, clearly indigents will be deprived of the type of representation presently available to the affluent.

For example, in every firm there are attorneys who prepare pleadings, try cases, research the law, and there are others who spend most of their time discussing strategy with clients, mediating on their behalf with legislators and government agencies and negotiating with opposition attorneys. While engaged in the latter type of activity, the attorney often wears several hats. There is sometimes a thin line between advice and direction, especially when the attorney also happens to own some stock in the client corporation.

Today, men who once served in high government office are partners in the most respectable Wall Street firms. It would be foolish to suppose that their impressive earnings derive from an ability to educate clients on the fine points of the anti-trust laws.

While it is true that success in the public eye attaches to successful litigators like F. Lee Bailey, in terms of financial remuneration most of the high earners in the profession work on Wall Street, never appear in court, and are unknown to the public at large. But whether a man counsels corporations, labor unions or felony defendants, by any standard, success follows him who regularly achieves satisfactory *bargains* for his client at the least possible cost. An attorney who had worked as house counsel for a large manufacturer told me once that the firm had made him an officer because he gave valuable advice while playing down his legal status. "I don't write complex memoranda," he said, "I simply send them a note expressing my opinion."

In this light, therefore, the concern of the courts and the bar associations for the integrity of ghetto practice is, at best, unwarranted and misplaced.

Not too long ago, at the request of a priest in Brownsville, Brooklyn, I found myself addressing over 100 Puerto Rican factory workers out on a wildcat strike. They were protesting an almost unbelievable "sweetheart" contract between their employer and bargaining representative that, among other omissions, did not take cognizance of an increase in the state minimum wage. Most of the strikers, incidentally, were eligible for welfare supplements but had been too proud to apply.

Technically, being an "officer of the court," as lawyers describe themselves, I suppose I should have told the group their strike was illegal, and fled the scene with all professional aplomb. Instead, I remained to say that while the workers risked being discharged from employment, as a practical, non-legal matter their collective strength might force the employer to capitulate to their just demands.

Unethical? Perhaps; but I had in mind those management attorneys from highly respectable firms in New York, Chicago, Atlanta and New Orleans who have amassed fortunes by unlawfully teaching employers how to break labor unions without getting caught. My ethical sense had also been dulled by the sight of too many upright attorneys parading well-coached, lying witnesses to the stand at Labor Board hearings.

Admittedly, therefore, conscientious practice in the ghetto does call for a certain amount of seemingly unorthodox activity. Eight students sponsored by the Law Students Civil Rights Research Council, who worked during the summer of 1966 in slum areas in Brownsville and East New York, did not learn much about drafting complaints but at the end they concluded the experience had made them better human beings. The students visited slum tenements to encourage the formation of tenants' associations and guided rent strikers to the housing court. (One who helped a tenant file a criminal complaint against his landlord heard himself denounced as a "Communist" by a clerk of the court.) Most often, however, the future lawyers simply hounded welfare case workers by telephone on behalf of aggrieved recipients, in storefronts operated by Christians and Jews United for Social Action (CUSA), a local community action organization.

These white students, two of them women, also attended evening meetings, went on bus outings with their "clients" and by accepting invitations to parties in the community effectively demonstrated that the concept of "black power," at least at the grass-roots level, does not exclude all outsiders.

William Stringfellow demonstrated in "My People Is the Enemy" that it is possible also for a lawyer to maintain his

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professional poise while dispensing legal advice on a Harlem street corner or while knoshing over local politics at Frank's Restaurant on 125th Street.

Stringfellow also anticipated the legal services component of the War Against Poverty with his low-keyed approach to the practice of law in the ghetto. Motivated by his Christian commitment, he moved quietly into a slum neighborhood in East Harlem and waited for the other residents to get used to seeing him around. Stringfellow eventually won the trust of the community because, unlike most visitors to the ghetto, he did not come on strong, had something to offer and evidently planned to stay awhile.

Neighborhood Emphasis

For the same reasons, the theoreticians of the Economic Opportunity Act linked the new legal services operations to community action programs and emphasized their *neighborhood* aspect. OEO Director Sargent Shriver has characterized legal services as "one of the crucial components of any broad and effective program" for remedying ghetto conditions. The theory is that the federal monies will best be spent not by providing counsel in the traditional, colonial manner but by giving the poor legal strength with which they can identify. A practitioner in a Brooklyn storefront who looks to Manhattan for his instructions and leaves his work area by nightfall will not satisfy the leaders of the poor or help solve their basic problems.

These problems, indeed, are enormous and almost all of them have legal overtones. In a speech in 1964, then Attorney-General Robert Kennedy aptly described poverty as a "state of helplessness—of inability to cope with the conditions of existence in our complex society." This impotence, which diminishes in intensity as a citizen ascends the economic ladder, often manifests itself in a mild paranoia which sees labor unions, Con Edison, the police and other power groups in active coalition against his interests.

The delay, then, in utilizing available funds for one of the few anti-poverty programs considered non-controversial by the Congress is both tragic and ironic. But, while over 200 other cities or communities to date have commenced legal services operations, it is only fair to say that the success or failure of the neighborhood concept in a city as large as New York will have a decisive impact on existing and future programs across the country.

It is also possible to concede the good faith of those who object to any meaningful local participation in such programs and still be persuaded that their fears stem from a lack of personal familiarity with life in the racial ghettos. In addition, there are deep-seated prejudices against the poor as clients which give rise to patronizing, "I-know-what's-best-for-you" attitudes. Most lawyers, in fact, are keenly aware that the malaise of poverty tends to infect him who comes too close to it.

Small practitioners who handle criminal cases have made an art out of not getting to know their clients. For many, the beauty of a lower court criminal practice is that a plea of guilty by the defendant, a most frequent occurrence, usually signals the end of the trial attorney's case and all contact with his client. But, obviously, a lawyer who wants to lend his skills both to the immediate problem and to the eradication of the root causes of the criminal activity and civil disorders must be willing to suffer the incoherence, delusions, the smells and the dirty streets that are indigenous to storefront practice.

Even the liberals among the Wall Street partisans, who can afford to be altruistic about legal activities that do not threaten their incomes, are probably unaware that they approach the subject from an inherently conservative position that derives from close daily association with the corporate personalities they represent. Because the overwhelming number of successful and influential practitioners go where the big money is, it is unthinkable that central control, no matter how responsible or well-intentioned, over neighborhood legal services should emanate from the financial district in any city. *Noblesse oblige*, in this area at least, arrives about ten years too late.

Many local practitioners, on the other hand, admittedly do see the advent of OEO-financed laywers both as competitors and as potential threats to the equanimity of their major clients, the landlords and the small banks. They are, of course, correct on the second count but it is only too evident that few attorneys make a living representing dispossessed tenants or testing, in court, the rights of wel-

fare recipients to privacy or adequate budget allowances. Presumably, these cases will predominate under the new programs.

The vested interest point of view, incidentally, appeared in a bill that passed during the last session of the New York State Assembly by a startling vote of 90 to 18. The legislation would have prevented third-year law students, under the guidance of senior attorneys in legal services corporations, from appearing with clients in minor court cases or at welfare hearings. Credit for defeating the bill in the upper chamber is owing to responsible officials of the Wall Street-oriented City Bar Association and Dean Robert McKay and other faculty members of the New York University School of Law.

But, paradoxically, the possibility that the legal arm of the War Against Poverty may accomplish radical reforms

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on behalf of the poor in the long run will also redound to the advantage of that sector of the profession that services a middle-class clientele. Just as successful protest demonstrations organized in the ghetto neighborhoods have encouraged small homeowners to form block associations in order to more effectively agitate for better municipal services, so too will legal successes in indigent cases enhance the image of the lawyer outside the slums. Significantly, even the American Bar Association, which only a few years ago denounced the British system for free legal aid as "socialistic," has adopted a similar point of view.

Hopefully, the advent of a neighborhood-based legal services system will aid in revamping outmoded legal procedures generally and in encouraging more widespread use of group practice for those well above the poverty line but too poor to afford effective and continuing legal representation.

Today, it is generally conceded that though indigents cannot even begin to think about hiring a lawyer, middle-income people in the big cities, especially, will also think twice before doing so. The cost of an urban lawyer's services, except for real estate closings where cash in hand or a new home tend to give a glow to the transaction, or personal injury litigation, where almost everyone recovers, for most citizens is usually disproportionate to the results achieved, and, therefore, a luxury item.

The fault in most cases is not attributable to the lawyer himself. He has no choice but to charge for the many hours he spends in a lower court, not to speak of the discourtesies he endures, waiting for a calendar call on a single claim worth one or two thousand dollars. The fault, instead, lies with an archaic and rigid system which, in practice, imposes a sacrosanct attorney-client relationship on all except the truly affluent.

The Dutch bishops as authentic teachers of doctrine

SOPHISTICATING THE CATECHISM

JOHN L. McKENZIE

Shortly after the middle of the thirteenth-century, an ambitious young scholar who held a chair of theology at the University of Paris expressed his dissatisfaction with the standard textbook of theology by writing a new textbook. Like many other ambitious scholars, he conceived a project of such vastness that it outlived him, and he died just short of the age of 50 with the work unfinished. Also like other ambitious scholars, he interrupted his work on his textbook to produce a number of specialized monographs in his field. His textbook incorporated a number of radical changes in the methods and content of the study of theology, and it excited considerable hostility among the defenders of traditional orthodoxy; as a result of their criticisms the writings of the scholar were condemned in the archdiocese of Paris three years after his death. The condemnation was meaningless when it was measured against the evident merits of his work. He was declared a doctor of the Church 46 years after his condemnation, and his textbook has survived to be used for 700 years. The scholar, of course, was the Dominican Fra Tommaso d'Aquino, and the textbook was the *Summa Theologica.*

I am reminded of Fra Tommaso when I take up the task of discussing the *Dutch Catechism* (Herder & Herder), but I do not wish to suggest any sensational parallels. The work is obviously excellent, and it may even be great; but one cannot judge greatness from this perspective. We are too close to it. That the *Summa Theologica* has survived 700 years says a great deal about the merits of the work, but it also says something about the immobility of theological thought during most of the same period. I hope the Church is not settling into another long period of immobility, and everything suggests that it is not. There may even be a parallel in the possibility of condemnation, and I would hazard the guess that a condemnation of the work, if it happens, will be about as meaningful as the condemnation of Thomas Aquinas in Paris. There is a certain satisfaction—I think the theologians call it *delectatio morosa* —in reflecting that the only claim of this archbishop of Paris and his theologians to immortality is that they condemned Thomas Aquinas. In the popular mythology of Purgatory, a most suitable purgation for Étienne Tempier would be beatitude deferred until he could recite the writings of Thomas Aquinas by memory; and since God's mercy is beyond reckoning, it would also be a very gentle purgation.

I do not suggest that the *Dutch Catechism* is the *Summa* of this century. It may be the best written compendium of the Catholic faith since the *Summa*, and with that we shall leave odious comparisons behind. The best way to insure literary endurance is to hit the audience at which you are aiming right in the eye. Thomas Aquinas did this, and the Dutch bishops may have done it. I am not the audience, although I think I am a representative of modern man,

FATHER JOHN L. MCKENZIE, S.J., *is the author of several books on Scripture, most recently,* Vital Concepts of the Bible *(Dimension).*

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whoever he may be; it takes more than a single reaction. But a reviewer is expected to give his own judgment, not the judgment of his contemporaries. Should my contemporaries not share my judgment in this instance, I shall depart from my accustomed modesty and say, so much the worse for them. A symposium of Catholic college students and graduates was published in this journal while I was doing the reading. One over 30—and I am—hesitates to attempt communication with such a group, but I wish they had read the *Dutch Catechism* before they read the Church out of business. It is not their fault that the Church was never presented to them in this way, and not entirely their fault that they never thought it could be presented in this way. Should any of them read this, I direct their attention to the adverb *not entirely*.

The publishers describe the Catechism as "controversial," and I wasted some time looking for the controversial material before the light dawned. I know that the Catechism has aroused suspicion in some extremely backward theological circles, but this is hardly news. These theological circles have not produced anything to match the *Dutch Catechism*, and at this writing they seem unlikely to do it. With red pencil in hand poised like the assassin's knife, I lurked in the margin seeking something which could be labeled at least *piis auribus offensivum*. Either I have no nose for that sort of thing, or there is nothing there. My considered professional theological judgment is that the *Dutch Catechism* is as safe as a case of whisky at a Methodist picnic.

The last remark was intended to reassure the timid; let me add at once that the Catechism is exciting, an adjective which has probably never been attached to catechisms. There are a few things the prospective purchaser should bear in mind. In the first place, it is not a catechism—that is, it is not question and answer; and I take it the Dutch hierarchy believe that the literary form so well employed by Bellarmine and Canisius (the latter a Dutchman, yet) for different people at a different time is now extinct for their public. It is written in straight prose which is marvelously lucid and simple without any loss of dignity. It is written for adults, not children—or if Dutch children are intended, then little Dutch boys and girls deserve the close study of psychologists and educators. It is written for the citizens of a democratic European state with high standards of education and living, and one can hardly fault the Dutch hierarchy for writing for their own people. It was not written for the Congo or Mississippi or the peasants of the Abruzzo. Most important of all, its acknowledged authors are the bishops of the Netherlands fulfilling their office as authentic teachers of Catholic doctrine in their diocese. The catechism is an official statement of Catholic teaching. And I realize that very few will admit that such a statement can be exciting. Yet after all, what ought to be more exciting?

The arrangement of topics is so much at variance with the traditional creed, commandments and sacraments that I would have to copy out the table of contents to show how different it is. No doubt there is some loss in the arrangement; think of generations of Dutch Catholics ignorant of the nine ways of being accessory to another's sin, the 11 diriment impediments, and the metaphysical attributes of God. But there is a principle at work, and I dare to summarize it as a description of the Christian experience in the modern world. The book is not divided into faith and works; they proceed together as components of a single reality. Much more space is given to the liturgy than traditional catechisms give it, but there is no section "on liturgy"; the reader encounters the liturgy in the book as he does in life, in the situations which the liturgy interprets. The book does not begin with God, but with the human condition; it ends with God, the eschatological goal of knowledge and love. Some traditional questions are not asked; I cannot think of any serious contemporary problem which is not raised. Whatever is raised is discussed with an overpowering honesty. This is not to say that every critical reader will be entirely satisfied. I was inclined to think that there may have been some treading on eggs in the questions of divorce and planned parenthood, but a careful reading of these passages removed most of my doubt. These are problems which have as yet no final solution, and may not have in the lifetime of anyone now living. The Catechism treats these in a way which admits future development. If this sounds evasive to some readers, I would like to have their own treatment of the problems for comparison, and I would beg them to remember that we defenders of free speech ought to recognize that the freedom of bishops is more inhibited than it ought to be.

That so much biblical material can be so usefully incorporated is simply amazing to a professional interpreter; more or less in the same line, the reader of the Catechism is often reminded that the Church has a history. The whole work is deeply affected by modern learning, whether in theology or the secular sciences; I do not believe the scholar will ever have his scholarship offended. The theology of the Catechism uses most of what is judged best in recent work by theologians themselves, and it brings the theology to bear on the faith and life of the practicing non-academic Catholic. The Catechism is written without the use of the technical terms of scholastic theology, and this contributes much to its lucidity and vigor—much also, I suppose, to its alleged "controversial" character.

If the Catechism deserves comparison with the *Summa*, it will have to be a book which opens up new areas. It may do this, but its merit is chiefly the discreet use of openings in theology which have already been made. That it should do this is much; that it is not "creative" scholarship in the usual sense is not out of harmony with its purpose. It is also much that it is a statement of Catholic doctrine which leaves room for openings. I think theologians ask for no more from the hierarchy than this, but the Catechism really does more. I said above, and I conclude by repeating, that the Catechism is exciting.

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PERPETUATING THE OBSOLETE

British novelists: eupeptic, predictable, sluggish

PAUL WEST

From time to time I try to distinguish the English attitude to literature from the American; I have to. I would have to even if I were able to commute across the Atlantic without finding my Englishness eroded by the American way. Who on earth could resist making comparisons and contrasts? Who, no matter how dispassionate an observer, could spare himself the voluptuous chore of interpreting a thousand juxtapositions? And who—be he cleric, don, tailor, tinker, ringmaster or computer operator—wouldn't ponder on how his own specialty fares on the other side?

But I am thinking about involvement, not mere noticing; about a gradual and perhaps irrevocable expropriation of one's sentiments and skills; a dialectic not so much of wanderlust from here to there and back again as of repeated dilemmas, and a doubleness—my being taken for a Canadian in both countries—which some will call dislocation and some ambivalence, but which I prefer to call double value: to myself, of course (as it would be if I were commuting between, say, Tripoli and Hong Kong), and maybe to those on either side who listen to my puzzlings.

It so happens that, each morning about 9.25, a regular 20 minutes late, the daily 10 VC from last-night New York to today's Manchester comes in low over the house I'm writing in. Part of the scenery here—of the local fauna, even—this jet reassures me. I don't feel half so stranded, so Britishly landlocked, as I would if I lived 50 miles away in Liverpool. The outside, the America I know, is still coming in, and in a giant tin bat, British-made.

Illogical and whimsical as this airport sentiment may be, it makes sense to someone as divided as myself: participant in two cultures, true member of neither. And especially so when I find among letters awaiting my arrival a lime-green card informing me that the International P.E.N. English Center's eight meetings this fall will include a "Galsworthy Centenary Dinner" (Chairman: the Rt. Hon. The Lord Butler of Saffron Walden, with the Rt. Hon. Jennie Lee, Minister for the Arts, among the Guests of Honour), to be followed a week later by a "Galsworthy Brains' Trust" chaired by Lady Snow.

PAUL WEST, *an Englishman presently teaching at Pennsylvania State University, is the author of* Alley Jaggers *(Harper & Row).*

Anyone not convinced that the New Britain is in fact easing its way back into the first quarter of the century can now rest, and rest assured. The Galsworthy Revival, begun on TV, is what the English call "quite a phenomenon"—proof to loyalists of the staying-sticking power of good old British phlegm (none of your foreign perversions and home-bred humbug) but, to anyone whose brains even minimally improve on a pound of barbecued frogspawn, proof of a national taste curdling in seven sinful things all of its own: predictability, homespunness, la-di-da, eupepsia, "good read" (the), mealy-mouthedness, and yore, which I will lip-serve as p-h-l-e-g-m-y.

P first then; and this means—because P is strong in the theater, is overpowering the novel, and has numbed the poetry quite—don't do anything new. The English are very much in love with their own society (all the strata), and even their denunciations of it are of the involuntarily addicted Sinclair Lewis type. They love it for an absurdity which, for them, reflects nothing universal or even international. So you have to search for a long time before you find, say, a novel that goes beyond *mores,* lets imagination have its head, forgets A. Bennett, A. Trollope, Uncle John Galsworthy (and all he stands for), and remotely compares with anything by Hawkes, Butor or Grass, or (to compile an older foreign canon) Faulkner, Beckett or Mann. Of an influencing Swift, Dickens or Lawrence, no sign at all.

Gentlemanly Novels

Part of the reason is that certain English novelists perpetuate the obsolete by serving as publisher's readers, whereas in the States much of the reading is done at and by the firm. I have talked with some of the rejected novelists—told to a man that they exercise insufficient "control" (as if they had been masturbating at a Galsworthy brains' trust). Woe betide, as one says here, anyone who dares to go beyond the kitchen sink, Bayswater bedsitters, bathetic adulterers, social climbing, and manners versus planners; or who joins the snot-smut-smegma school that traffics in Americanisms, intermedia, and ideas. There is only one thing the English hate worse than a prose-poem, and that is an idea not harnessed to a Sunday column on elegant living (Tibetan anchovies, Cretan trusses), on refined travel, doctors' pay and how the Earl of Whatnot makes ends meet. What thinking is done

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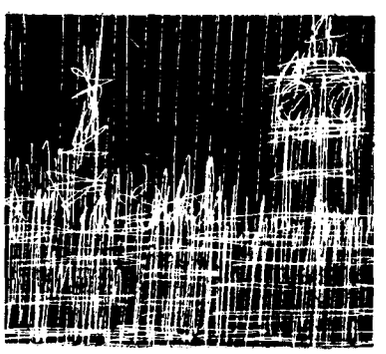
is done by dons on BBC radio, and most of the pseudo-thinking is done by such wisecracking pundits as Malcolm Muggeridge and Michael Frayn (though some by dons on BBC TV).

In the novel, which is what in general interests me most and in England most appalls me, there is no thinking at all—except, perhaps, for some of Golding, a few pages of Murdoch, and some lines of Doris More-or-Lessing. What the British want the British get. Those who read entire the compendious special issues *The Times Literary Supplement* devotes to literature at large are light-years away from the average British reader, who is always a stranger and afraid. The British idea of a challenging novel is *Lucky Jim*, which incensed Somerset Maugham but which, as a portrait of society, comes nowhere near Thomas Pynchon's *The Crying of Lot 49* for penetration, originality and something I call the transcendent stare. The British, unlike Europeans, don't stare; if you stare long enough you see through things, and that would never do. It's easier for reviewers and critics to give good grades to well-behaved books than to upset the curriculum. After all (hence my metaphor), a gentleman is someone whom both gentlemen and boors can predict. And a gentlemanly book is one that doesn't upset you but says something *nice*.

Homespunness next: foreign poets came to a read-in at the Albert Hall, and good ones too; but the national taste in poetry is John Betjeman, the parish rhymer. With him, as with the neo-Galsworthies (and the recrudescent Forsytes on TV), you can not only predict; you can be sure that English English in these hands will stay English. What the nation wants is standard cuts from the national fabric: not epitomes of life in general but rendered in British terms (which might be worth having, as Keith Waterhouse's *Jubb*, about a sex fantasist, is); not that, by any means. It wants epitomes of British life which, as the British say, are "a credit" to the society they spring from. Nothing black or mutinously cosmopolitan; nothing like Burroughs or Borgès; but something, I regret to say, in tune with the truth of Sir Osbert Sitwell's jibe: "Nothing exists which the British bourgeoisie / Does not understand; / Therefore there is no death / — And, of course, no life."

Indeed—because it is after all a part of British life—even working-class fiction appeals to bourgeois readers, gives them a tart, almost exotic experience they accept with licentious favor, happy to know that the matter is just as English and trustworthy (apart from the plebian crudities) as novels by clever, dowdy girls about clever, dowdy girls, by girls who write on fashion and the pill for *The Guardian* about girls who. . . . Buy British, the posters used to say; "rum, sodomy and the lash," said Churchill in a definitive Marlborough simplification of the British Nayvee. If you stereotype the national product, then you can pretty well predict it; and the more you can predict it the safer you feel. And the safer you feel, the more ordinary; which is what homespun is.

Of la-di-da (swagger or pretension in manners and pronunciation, as the *Concise Oxford* puts it) I have little to say. Wherever the swingers are, most English people who claim to be educated are as anxious as ever to sound refined, proper and rehearsed. Talk? You talk in formulae that keep you correct (as greens, chewed not putted upon, keep you regular) and just about preclude any chance of your seeming uglily spontaneous. Supposedly, the primness of the bourgeoisie has worn away during Harold Wilson's New Anglo-Saxon Revolution (the Prime Minister likes the dark pigment of HP sauce on his fish and chips); but for the most part it's business as usual—prissiness as usual: an aural mother-of-pearl indication of something even worse. I mean a refusal to be "present" (as some theologians put it) to others, without hedges and fences, checks and balances; a refusal of people in all their idiosyncratic uniqueness in favor of formulae-uttering adult-erates who began, of course, as formulae-uttering children, more often seen than heard. Are these, then, your readers when you publish your satire (Swiftian, not Betjemanian), an assault on man, a Rabelaisian or mandarin diatribe ignoring the local tribe altogether along with the tribute it exacts? No, all they want is the verbal equivalent of good cheer: an undemanding, unmemorable, seemly something that occupies



the mind without informing it, and therefore not a novel but the memoirs of a diplomat, a general or a society hostess. Stuck-up we used to call it in our village, meaning a head carried so disparagingly erect it cannot think.

Eupepsia is what you achieve when you stick to the familiar, the homegrown, and continually fend off the unseemly. A "good read" is a mindless read, nowhere near as inspiring even as good heavens or as useful as good spirits, or—not to be mealy-mouthed about it, for I hasten to reach my American comparisons, and British phlegm is all of a piece anyway—as good as red or dead. Yore, with ironical malice, I leave to an expert who knew the truth about life had been found by the British long before American colonials became uppity and even longer before British philosophers clinched it for the last time and turned their minds to problems of language. "If you do not think about the future," wrote Galsworthy, "you cannot have one." Well, phlegm rarely betokens

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hope or foresight, whereas it is the future—some caustic extrapolation of the present—with which American novelists and their critics occupy themselves most often, combining present pieces to build an anticipatory erector-set Armageddon, Babylon or Samarkand that dismisses Now altogether and assaults the reader pyrotechnically. In a hot hurry, the critics, too: look how much commentary already exists on the work of Hawkes and Barth, how little on such a prolific and inventive English novelist as Anthony Burgess.

One reason, I believe, is that the British have lost faith in the power of discovery, or revelation, in the word. Content mostly with sociological and naturalistic mirror-images and an occasional wink of bemused condescension at the American prose jamboree, they manage best the tentative (Angus Wilson, Iris Murdoch, Alan Sharp), the eclectic (Leavis and Forster), the informal-urbane (Connolly and Pritchett), and the short-winded *aperçu* (no labor, no fuss, no Systems), as if annotating a defunct or a funked ritual, as chary of "epiphany" or "vision" (those Jacobin things) as the typical creative or critical American is drawn to them. The one stays with society and only rarely gets beyond it, as do Murdoch in some of her essays and Frank Kermode in his book on fiction, *The Sense of an Ending*. Big ideas, the most mind-manifesting things of all, come from 3,000 miles away or, on the level of commerce, from across the Channel.

American novelists and critics, I think (what a dangerous way to begin a sentence), take their work seriously; try not to be trivial, elaborate their testimony into testament, and regard literature as something more than gentlemen's relish. Even Edmund Wilson, in some ways the most English-seeming of the American critics, has done his stint of idea-marshaling, has developed over several decades a thorough sense of the edifice of his own thought. In England it is George Steiner, an American transplant, who most conspicuously works in the American tradition; less captious than Leavis, less narrow than Kermode, but lacking Wilson's magistral amenity of manner, he pounds through to fundamentals that several literatures have in common and says important things with a high (sometimes top-heavy) seriousness that surely accounts for *The Observer*'s recent review of his *Literature and Silence* as *"Literature and Science"*—the first being an unpredictable, foreign notion, the second a familiar English pair, portending Snow.

As John W. Aldridge pointed out in a review of one of my own novels, few contemporary English novelists have taken up the point of view of the future, the mind, the grave. They still, like plumbers and traffic policemen, function as socially creditable units whereas (in my view) the novelist, much as he may have begun as an observer of manners, owes allegiance not to society but to literature and himself alone, as Borgès the inspired annotator—leeching his way through literature from *Beowulf* to the books of his close friends—has pointed out. Much of the blather about the dying-dead-renascent novel derives from a fatuous identification of the fictional tree with one of its branches. The "novel" isn't butter or linen, about whose quality you can complain; it's vision, take it or leave it.

I say "novel," but in fact there's only prose you run to the right-hand margin, and prose you don't; and prose you read to yourself or somehow get performed. The word "poetry" seems to me more useful as an index to distortions and special intensities of prose than as a medium or genre. The categories don't matter. What does matter, and what impresses me, is that American critics—with gigantic steadfastness analyzing the arbitrary forms and the essential fabricatedness of literature (say Kenneth Burke, Leslie Fiedler, Northrop Frye, R. W. B. Lewis, Philip Young)—are pressing creativity to yield up its secrets, its first principles. They want to be ready, with the right terms, for when the creators come up with what is going to be the best writing of the third third of the century. They believe in inexhaustible universals that yield programs.

English critics, on the other hand, continue in the eloquent myopic funk that has afflicted them since James' prefaces showed them up. To put it another way: American criticism is Aristotelian in temper (Aristotle didn't know exactly what he was about, but his articulate fumblings make us think) whereas British criticism evokes Martial, the Silver Age epigrammatist lauded by H. W. Garrod for "the same never-failing grace and charm and brilliance, the same arresting ingenuity, an equal facility and finish." On the one hand, an imaginative divining of fundamentals during which the critic meets, as it were, underground, the creative man, with whom he may emerge as a partner. On the other hand, a preferential whimsicality that tastes a traditional diet and has had the same silver palate for decades. It's the difference between phlegm, once supposed to be one of the four humors but now recognized by outsiders as British sluggishness, and phlogiston, once supposed to be the combustible element in things that burn, but now known to be mythical. Between the viscid hindrance and the vital figment, the choice is not only plain; it is also an elaborate, ancient, traitorous joy.

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RAYMOND ROSELIEP

GOLDFINCH

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RECORDS

Bach was fond of setting himself gigantic tasks on which to exercise his prodigious technical powers, with results—in the 48 preludes and fugues of the *Well-Tempered Clavier,* the six sonatas for unaccompanied violin —that are always impressive as pieces of tonal engineering, but not always moving in addition as expressive communication. But *The Art of Fugue* is exceptional in the high musical quality of most of its pieces of fugal construction—despite which I recommend listening to no more than two or three at one sitting. The orchestral version on low-priced Nonesuch HB-3013 is performed well by the Chamber Orchestra of the Saar under Ristenpart.

What is true of Bach's instrumental works is equally true of his cantatas, many of which are routine and musically uninteresting exercises of his craftsmanship. But No. 4, *Christ lag in Todesbanden,* is one of his great utterances; and it is sung well by the Wagner Chorale on Angel 36014, with the lovely Mass in G minor of Vaughan Williams on the reverse side.

To these Deutsche Grammophon 136-511 (stereo) adds Mozart's *Coronation* Mass K.317, a comparatively early work, but all of it very beautiful, and the *Credo* especially impressive, with its powerful Allegro opening section, then the change to Adagio for moving passages on the words *"Et incarnatus est," "Crucifixus etiam"* and *"passus, et sepultus est,"* and then the return to the Allegro, with a lovely episode on *"Et in spiritum sanctum."* Markevitch conducts an excellent performance with the Lamoureux Orchestra, the Brasseur Chorale and a solo quartet comprising Maria Stader, Oralia Dominguez, Ernst Häfliger and Michel Roud. In addition, Stader sings the beautiful *"Et incarnatus est"* from Mozart's Mass in C minor K.427, and his less consequential *Exsultate Jubilate* K.165, with the Berlin Radio Symphony under Fricsay.

The early performance of Mozart's *The Magic Flute* conducted by Fricsay, now on low-priced Heliodor H-25057, has Stader, Häfliger and Fischer-Dieskau with their fresher voices of ten years ago—reasons enough to prefer it to the recent performance conducted by Böhm on Deutsche Grammophon 18981/3, with Evelyn Lear, Fritz Wunderlich and Fischer-Dieskau.

Though Donizetti's *L'Elisir d'Amore* is a comedy, with delightful *buffa* writing that Renato Capecchi sings effectively in the performance conducted by Molinari-Pradelli, on Angel BL-3701, it also has a considerable amount of engaging lyrical writing, in which Mirella Freni's singing is wholly admirable, but Nicolai Gedda's hasn't the sensuous warmth and ease of flow of the Italian tenor voice. For this reason the performance with Luigi Alva and Rosanna Carteri on low-priced Seraphim 6001 is preferable.

Alban Berg's idiom communicates no coherent sense to me in his intrumental works; but the distorted vocal declamation and discordant orchestral comment of his opera *Wozzeck* do powerfully intensify for me the expressive force of the nightmarish drama; and the work is one of this century's few distinguished achievements in opera. The performance on CBS 32-21-0001 offers Boulez's superb statement of the orchestral part with the Paris Opera Orchestra; but Böhm's with the Berlin Opera Orchestra, on Deutsche Grammophon 18991/2, is excellent, and with it one hears singing by Fischer-Dieskau, Lear and the others that adheres more accurately to the printed score than does the singing of Walter Berry, Isabel Strauss, Fritz Uhl and Karl Dönch in the Boulez performance.

The Spanish soprano Montserrat Caballé, who has sung here mostly in Italian opera, turns out astonishingly, on RCA Victor LM-2956, to be a remarkably effective singer of Strauss's songs, to which she brings her ability to deploy her voice in long, beautifully shaped phrases, and an expressive intensity that is contained within the shape of the phrase. Included are favorites that are actually Strauss's best—*Traum durch die Dämmerung, Freundliche Vision, Befreit, Die Nacht* and *Wiegenlied.* The recording causes the singing to be heard in echoing space.

The Russian songs that Jennie Tourel sings admirably on low-priced Odyssey 32-16-0069 include several fine ones: Glinka's *Doubt* and *Elegy* and Tchaikovsky's *Lullaby* and *Pagadi* Op. 16 Nos. 1 and 2, in addition to his best-known *None but the Lonely Heart.*

The performances that Toscanini's players recall are not only those of the works of the great masters, but also those of "pop" numbers, to which he brought the same complete commitment of his powers, and in which one hears the same plastic shaping, the same clarifying of texture and outline, producing the same effect of revelation. An outstanding example is the Ponchielli *Dance of the Hours* reissued on low-priced Victrola 1263, which has also superb performances of Tchaikovsky's *Nutcracker Suite* and a Suite from Bizet's *Carmen.* To obtain their correct sound one must turn down the treble (a great deal in the *Nutcracker* music) and turn up the bass (a great deal in the *Carmen*). Victrola 1262 has one of Toscanini's marvelous performances of Haydn—this one of the Symphony No. 101 (*Clock*), regrettably poorly reproduced. With the fake echo-chamber resonance removed, one hears it in the extreme acoustic deadness of Studio 3A—the first two movements with what appears to be the ample and solid sound, and the surface noise, of the original 78-rpm recording, the last two with what appears to be the thin, pallid sound of an LP transfer. The reverse side has the performance of Haydn's No. 94 (*Surprise*), regrettably flawed by the impossibly fast Minuet and the

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too rigidly maintained tempos of the first and last movements, but the flawed performance of a great musician. With treble turned down and bass turned up the sound is excellent.

The piano music of Debussy on Epic LC-3945 includes several major works—*Estampes, L'Isle joyeuse*, the two sets of *Images*; and these include a few uninteresting pieces, but also Debussy's best: *Reflets dans l'eau, Jardins sous la pluie,* and his two masterpieces, *Poissons d'or* and *La Soiree dans Grenade*. This is music which Charles Rosen plays very well; and it is regrettable that the recording reduces and dulls the robust and brilliant sonorities that are one of their excellences. B. H. HAGGIN

PUMPKIN SEEDS AND DAFFODILS

THE SCREEN

"Camelot" burst in on us in a blaze of glory—with magnificent sets and costumes, some lovely soft color photography, and a good cast doing their best in the movie version of the Loewe and Lerner stage show. And it got pro and con reviews as varied as those that greeted "The Bible . . . In the Beginning" and as varied as the many versions of the Arthurian legend, itself, that have turned up since the sixth century. Reviewers praised its opulent production, good acting, fine score, colorful pageantry; and reviewers, sometimes in the same reviews, lamented its over-elaborate production, uneven performances, middling music, muddled story, and stinginess of pageantry. I liked it—not only because I'd taken a dim view of the dull stage show and found the movie a great improvement, but also because the "Camelot" film is a handsome and quite touching retelling of the sentimental-sad Arthur story.

Since there are so many versions of the Arthur legend, I suppose anyone telling it now would have a right to interpolate as long as he followed the main traditions. The film's script, written by Alan Jay Lerner who also wrote the lyrics and the stage play's book and lyrics which stemmed somewhat vaguely from T.H. White's *The Once and Future King,* has expanded the play somewhat but not changed it greatly. I wish the movie could have included some of the better-known knights (Gawain, Gareth, Galahad, etc.) but Lerner obviously wanted to simplify the story and concentrate on the idealistic King Arthur with his theories about a new order of chivalry in which might is used only for right and there is justice for all with even trial by jury. Practically all of the film, which starts with Arthur about to attack the castle to which Lancelot and Guenevere have fled, is told as a flashback meant to answer Arthur's "How did it happen? Where did I go wrong?" We see Arthur's first meeting with Guenevere, who is on her way to marry him. And when he tells her, in this amusing scene, how he happened to become king by pulling Excalibur from a block of stone and when he sings the film's fine title song, he wins her as well as us. And the wedding scene that follows is a moving picture of extraordinary beauty, as are so many of the scenes in Jack Warner's $15 million production. The fact that Guenevere's wedding dress cost $12,000 and has thousands of pumpkin seeds on it and that 2,400 daffodil bulbs were planted for the pretty picnic scene in which Vanessa Redgrave sings "The Lusty Month of May" is not the important thing. What is noteworthy is that all these scenes, enhanced by Richard Kline's first-rate photography, are such a pleasure to see. And neither is it important as to whether or not the leading actors do their own singing; the voices we hear on the sound track singing the songs by Frederick Loewe add greatly to the enjoyment of the movie.

I doubt very much if the handsome young Italian, Franco Nero who has a pronounced accent as Lancelot De Lac, is doing his own singing of "If Ever I Would Leave You" or his other songs in a voice that comes through nicely *without* any accent in the lyrics. But no matter. Nero is excellent as Lance, the pure, almost priggish, holier-than-thou fellow who arrives at Camelot and whose attitudes annoy the knights and Queen Guenevere—until she falls in love with him and becomes unfaithful to her husband. In most of her scenes, Miss Redgrave is exquisite as Guenevere and a joy to behold, but at times her beauty seems to disappear and her charm falls flat. It is greatly to the credit of director Joshua Logan, however, that the success of the three key roles must be attributed. Richard Harris is superb as King Arthur, the bluff, honest, idealistic man who is at first angered when he discovers his best knight and attractive wife are having an affair. "I love them and they answer me with pain," he reflects; he refuses to let anger sway him to revenge, "I shall be a king; we are civilized; we shall live through this together and may God have mercy on us all." Harris succeeds in making Arthur a man of strength and sensitivity—a good man who deserves better than he gets from his wife, his best friend, and his Round Table knights who are spurred by the traitorous Mordred into betraying the King.

In supporting roles, David Hemmings is almost too obviously mean and evil as Arthur's illegitimate son who delights in exposing Guenevere's illicit love for Lancelot and using their demoralizing affair as an excuse for breaking up the Round Table, but Lionel Jeffries is fine as dotty King Pellinore, and so are Pierre Olaf as Dap and Laurence Naismith in his brief scenes as Merlyn. As a spectacle, "Camelot" shines and sparkles. As a triangular love story, it falters at times but is still heartbreaking. Perhaps sentimentalists like me are most moved by the tale of a good man whose idealism didn't work and who was let down by those he loved. But perhaps a little sentiment and idealism is what we need in these trying times and it's good for us to remember "That once there was a spot for one brief shining moment that was known as Camelot." PHILIP T. HARTUNG

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BOOKS

Birmingham and Rubenstein on the destiny of our crowd

Our Crowd

STEPHEN BIRMINGHAM

Harper & Row, $8.95

STEPHEN ZOLL

Our Crowd is an entertaining account of a number of people who became very rich, largely married each other, and had enormously rich children. All these people were Jewish, although the children were less so than the parents; genetically, fathers and sons were to finance what the Bachs were to music. These are the entertaining facts: that the people making up Our Crowd (Seligmans, Guggenheims, Loebs, Schiffs, Warburgs, Lehmans, Strauses, Ickelheimers, Goldmans and Sachses, to name the best known) immigrated here to escape German anti-Semitism in the middle third of the nineteenth century, made money in commerce (peddling) and hugely increased it in the business of investment banking. Who doesn't like to read about vast sums of money—it might almost be one's own. (Nothing so reads like success.)

But nowhere does the author make the connection or draw the conclusions implied by the book's subject, between the making of money and the fact of being Jewish. There may well not be a connection. Anyway, like the Zionist who could turn any discussion to his only subject and who, unprepared to speak on the natural history of the Burmese elephant, discoursed instead about the Burmese elephant and the Jewish Question, this review will take for its subject, opportunity and the minority heritage.

Birmingham was searching, of course, for a unifying theme. This theme is limited to the Jewishness of the members of Our Crowd; but religious persuasion is a fact and not really a theme, a point of historical organization, not of speculative departure. He finds trends that repeat among families: the native land, the moment of arrival in this country, the hard work, the family solidarity and probity, the peddling, the accumulation of stock, the liquidation of inventory, putting the cash to work in other people's businesses, the achievement of reputations for unassailable integrity. He suggests that insistence on cash may be a particularly Jewish manifestation of temperament because middle-European Jews had a long history of periodically having their property confiscated. But as well, among the trends described by Birmingham, and starting with August Belmont who may or may not have been born Schoenberg, there seems a growing sentiment toward assimilation: the founding of the Ethical Culture Society, the later out-of-faith marriages, the toying with the idea of conversion to Catholicism as did Otto Kahn, the slow attrition of membership at Temple Emanu—El.

What is suggested by assimilation is that if Jewishness can be abandoned, then it was to begin with merely a matter of religious preference and loyalty, not a racial or nationalistic or genetic predetermination.

A willed preference? Is that all? But Jews have been despised. Any group that prefers a ritual, and will not yield its loyalty under the pressure of persecution, might well be changed, even in its genes, first by that persecution and second by the resulting insularity. There are several theories about this. One holds that Jews, for some hundreds of years, while Christians of intellectual capacity were committing genetic suicide in the monasteries, were sending their brightest young minds to the Yeshivas to become rabbis; a rabbi, we are told, was the best catch imaginable for the rich farmer's or merchant's daughter. The number of rabbis in the family was, like the owning of Indulgences, a matter of present status and future security.

Gentiles rewarded intellect with celibacy, while Jews, systematically, sought a union between the power of abstraction and organizational ability: academic intellect and peasant cunning. These traits are two of the many stereotypes of the Jew, who has been acclaimed for the former and condemned for the latter, whether or not it is clear which is which. The line between praiseworthy intellect and deceitful cunning has often enough been an arbitrary definition drawn by fiat of the country where Jews lived.

In a repressive country, any and all mental activity may be declared deceitful and the group so named has to learn a behavior that accommodates the majority. This accommodation may well have produced a further modification and a characteristic often called the ghetto mentality. "Survival of the fittest" may depend on passive or aggressive qualities according to circumstance. And it would seem likely that among the first immigrants from the ghetto, one would find the most vital and determined members, the aggressive deviants, while the passive ones stayed behind for further punishment.

Whatever the characteristics of the immigrants, they arrived here in their initial tribal vigor at a time when this country most needed their talents—whether these were innate or acquired. It was a period of great expansion and hugely increasing specialization. Peddlers were the first to provide the convenience of ready-made goods: the Guggenheim fortune was founded on merchandizing a stove polish; the Seligmans' trade in underwear, shawls, pins, needles, buttons and cheap eyeglasses. As the country's growth required matching growth in its natural resources, Lewisohn money was put to work consolidating the copper smelting industry. The far-flung peddlers gravitated to New York as industry next needed free-swinging and innovative financing to fuel its expansion. Joseph Seligman was asked by Grant to be his Secretary of the Treasury on the basis of his performance as an investment banker only 20 odd years removed from selling packets of pins in the Southern mountains. Seligman

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thought his greater duty to his country was to stick around Wall Street and, along with J. P. Morgan and others, finance the country's railroads.

German Jews, speaking Yiddish, German and what could only have been, at first, a horribly broken English, have another group characteristic in the speed of their acculturation in America and the acquisition of a profound restraint in their style. They were conservative consultants to government, advisors of presidents, supporters of philanthropies, founders of museums and universities, patrons of orchestras and operas, but also clients for progressive architecture and supporters of unknown painters. Nevertheless, they stayed out of the limelight and the Republic is the richer.

Whatever it was they had, they had more than their fair share of it. As what is unfair can sometimes be legislated aright, we might ask: how serious was the political consequence of the great number of intermarriages between families who constituted so privileged an economic and genetic pool? Was there bred, as one often hears, a master race stealthily consolidating power for a Zionist/Wall Street cabal? Our Crowd Power? Birmingham's evidence is that the pinnacle was reached, a purpose was served, and power was relinquished. J. and W. Seligman Company today no longer lists a Seligman as a partner.

The author makes a most interesting biological supposition: "Joseph's [Seligman] grandson, George Hellman, was alarmed at what was happening to the Seligman birthrate. At the procreative rate of the original David and Fanny Seligman—who produced 8 sons and 3 daughters—there would have been . . . some, 1,536 Seligman boys in New York. . . .Yet the opposite was the case. Early Seligmans had the knack of producing mostly boys; later generations produced female children or none at all. The Seligman name, in barely three generations time, was dying out. . . . It was a genetic fact that other families of the crowd were having to face. It was almost as though, as the families grew rich and the need to produce sons grew less acute, fewer sons were born."

There is almost an equation of having sons and assuming a social aggressiveness. If there had been an accidental genetic superiority inherent in these German immigrants, it bred out rather quickly after they made their contribution. Or, contrariwise, no such superiority is necessary to explain their phenomenon, and instead there is a particular vitality freed when the constraint of the ghetto is removed. Fortunate is the nation, on plain and readable evidence, which first can use that deviant energy and second can insure that whatever energy is extra to the ex-ghetto-dweller comes ultimately to be more softly spent in assimilative emulation.

After Auschwitz

RICHARD L. RUBENSTEIN

Bobbs-Merrill, $5.95

MICHAEL D. ZEIK

"Leth din v'leth dyan": "There is neither judgment nor Judge!" With these words Elisha ben Abuyah abandoned his God, as he watched in anguish the suffering of the Jews during the Hadrianic War of the 1st Century. In *After Auschwitz,* Rabbi Richard Rubenstein makes these words his own.

In August of 1961, Rubenstein visited Germany as a guest of the Bundes-presseamt, to make a survey of religious and cultural trends. In the course of this survey, he interviewed Heinrich Grüber, heroic Dean of the Evangelical Church of East and West Berlin. For his efforts on behalf of the Jews of Nazi Germany, this Protestant clergyman had ended up in Dachau himself, narrowly escaping death. Yet it was a conversation with Dean Grüber that cost Rubenstein his faith in the God of Deuteronomy, in the God who is operative in history.

Grüber spoke of the Jews with the traditional exultation and fascination of the educated, believing Christian: the Jews were a "Chosen People"; the hand of God was on them; even the concentration camps and Nazi torture were somehow part of God's mysterious providence. For Rubenstein there was, and is, implicit in this position (although Grüber denies it), the assertion that the Jews were being punished by the Nazis for their sins, and that the Nazis were therefore the right arm of God in twentieth-century history!

The *theological* dimensions of Auschwitz thus exploded in his face, and Rubenstein became the first major "death-of-God" theologian in contemporary Judaism. (Martin Buber's *Eclipse of God* is written with another thrust, entirely.) After Auschwitz, says Rubenstein, it is far more reverent to *dis*believe than to believe in a God of history. Was God punishing the six million Jews—the aged, the young, the innocent children—who perished in the gas chambers? What was the sin which merited this fate? Always articulate, frequently brilliant, Rubenstein spells out the implications of this basic insight for a variety of contemporary issues—including Harvey Cox's "secular city," and "situation ethics." Not since Arthur Cohen's *The Natural and the Supernatural Jew,* have I read so fascinating a book by a Jewish theologian.

Nor is it entirely by chance that Arthur Cohen comes to mind. I would say that Rubenstein and Cohen represent the two extreme poles of modern Jewish theology—with most of the other thinkers falling somewhere in between. It was Cohen who five years ago warned that despite the increase in the number of synagogues and Jewish community centers in the country, the supernatural heart of Judaism was scarcely beating. "Jewishness"—the exotic dishes, the ironic phrases, the philanthropic organizations — flourished; "Judaism — the wrestling with the living God, the sense of Israel's vocation to the nations—was in critical decline. This was by no means an attempt to validate strict, Orthodox Judaism over latitudinarian Reform. Both, claimed Cohen, were quite capable of supplanting God with idols: traditionalism for the one, humanitarianism for the other.

For Rubenstein, on the contrary, the problem is not that of religion getting in the way of God, but of God getting in the way of religion. In turning his back on the God of history, Rubenstein did not throw over the Rabbinate. He remains a Jew, a rabbi—indeed, a religious man. It is here that he parts company

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with men whose views he otherwise admires, like Albert Camus. Once Camus came to the conclusion (as he did in *The Plague*) that human suffering is not the judiciously meted-out punishment of sinful man by an all-knowing God, but rather the capricious, absurd, ultimately meaningless play of the cosmos, he turned his back on religion forever. A grave mistake, says Rubenstein; it is precisely because there is no God in history that man so desperately needs religion. Why is that?

Well, what is religion? The author follows Freud here, but not blindly. Freud-cum-Eliade, would be a more accurate description. Myth, says Rubenstein, should not crassly be dismissed by modern man as pre-scientific nonsense. "If the insights of depth psychology have any validity," he writes, "myth must be seen as the attempt of a community to objectify and thus to deal with its deepest psychic and interpersonal dilemmas. Similarily, traditional ritual offers members of a community the opportunity to cope, both consciously and unconsciously, with the crises of life."

So important are these religious rituals to him—the ways in which men share the decisive moments of life (birth, puberty, marriage, and death)—that he prefers the "priestly" to the "prophetic" dimension of religion. "Were I a Christian," he writes, "I would undoubtedly be an Anglican or Roman Catholic."

And it is this appreciation for the "priestly," by the way, that explains, in part, the author's quarrel with *The Secular City* of Harvey Cox. "Is it really progress," Rubenstein asks, "to exchange a religious life with a plenitude of emotional expressiveness for a desiccated rationalism which forces emotional response out of the sanctuary and into the market place?" Besides all this, religion plays a valuable role in the achievement of personal identity. Therefore, argues Rabbi Rubenstein, as the God-idea recedes, and man recognizes ever more clearly his absurd and lowly position in the universe, as well as his alienated, depersonalized position in a technological society, religion, tradition and ritual become greater values than ever before. Leviticus will outlast Deuteronomy and the Prophets. The theological implications of the return to Israel complement the implication of Auschwitz. The death of Yahweh means a return to Baal, to Astarte, to the divinities of earth and nature, to the life-forces of Palestinian soil. The secular state of Israel itself is a demythologizing time-bomb which one day will explode the magic concept of the "Chosen People." Auschwitz and secular Israel are the two great modern theological facts with which all future Jewish thinkers have to reckon. The Jews have only begun to do this, he asserts. It takes a century to evaluate an Auschwitz.

Rubenstein states in advance that the Christian reader will not agree with him that the Jews are not a "Chosen People." For if the Jews were an utterly normal people, with no supernatural mission, there would be less reason to assert that a Jewish "Messiah" had any transcendental significance. And so, the author merely asks the *Jews* to give up the tragic myth, and to recognize that it is this very "Chosenness" which has set them apart both as heroes and villains in the drama of sin and redemption—the object of abnormal demands and demonic hatreds on the part of the Christian world.

Rabbi Rubenstein is right. There is much that the Christian reader cannot accept in his book. But let the Christian be slow to justify the ways of Yahweh to Rubenstein. Let him remember that this was the delicious occupation of the comforters of Job—at the very moment that Yahweh blasted them with the amazing judgment: "My wrath is kindled against thee . . . because you have not spoken the thing that is right before me, as my servant Job hath!" It isn't that I think faith is bad or impossible; but, if it is entertained by abstraction from Auschwitz, it is cheap. And I don't think we were meant to present cheap gifts to God.

I wonder, finally, however (and this will infuriate Rubenstein, if he ever reads it), whether he is not ultimately one of Cohen's rare "Supernatural Jews," wrestling with the living God. Applying one of his favorite distinctions to his own case, I would say that only his *manifest* reasons for clinging to Judaism are utilitarian: Judaism is self-confirming (since he was born a Jew), and it provides communal strength in the tragic and decisive moments of life. But surely there are other (and less costly) ways than religion to achieve both self-identity and community. Moreover, if it is normalcy and cessation of suffering that Rubenstein seeks, there are better ways of finding it than loyalty to Judaism. The "Chosen People" syndrome aside, the Jews stand a very good chance, in the naked context of sociology, of being the world's favorite social and political scapegoat for centuries to come. As I write this article, events demonstrate tragically, the symbolic inadequacy of Israel as the "normal Eden." Rubenstein's *manifest* reasons for clinging to Judaism are utilitarian, but not really useful. I wonder what his *latent* reasons are.

The Emergence of Philosophy of Religion

JAMES COLLINS

Yale University Press, $12.50

LOUIS DUPRÉ

Whenever Professor Collins publishes a new book, everyone takes the scholarly research for granted. Yet many will wonder, as I did, whether in the present case the work was worth the author's while. How relevant is a study of the historical origins of philosophy of religion at a time when religion itself is undergoing such profound transformation? What can Hume tell us about our present needs? Or Kant and Hegel? We think of their positions on religion as milestones along the way which we have left behind long ago.

After having read this voluminous and often difficult work, I had to change my mind on this and many other issues. I am now convinced that philosophy's present attitude toward religion cannot be fully understood until we grasp its roots in the revolution that took place between 1730-1830. It is about this revolution and its protagonists, Hume, Kant, Hegel, that Collins writes. Of course, before the reader can accept his conclusion, he will have to rid himself

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of a number of popular conceptions. He must learn that Hume's attitude toward religion is not purely negative; that Kant did not reduce religion to morality but, on the contrary, showed that the will cannot attain its moral ideal of holiness except by a religious, supra-moral commitment; that Hegel did not replace revelation by philosophy, but proved the opposite, namely, that there can be no religion without revelation and no philosophy without religion.

Yet, above all, the reader must learn about the nature of the revolution itself. The three philosophers for the first time "religionized" the theory of God, and that is the crux of all our problems today. This drastic change in the talk about God occurred almost by accident. Hume's empiricism and Kant's criticism excluded all speculation about God "as he is in himself." So both philosophers, if they were to maintain any rational reflection upon religion, had to look for a foundation of man's God-talk in experience. Hume found it in the passions of hope and fear, Kant in the implications of man's moral life.

The details of these solutions are less interesting than the fact that they made philosophy concentrate upon religion as an integral part of human experience. With this, philosophy of religion was born. Even philosophers like Hegel, who no longer shared Kant and Hume's anti-metaphysical attitudes, could never again agree with the predecessors of Hume and Kant that belief in God is a matter of objective, impersonal truth. Hume's and Kant's original conviction may have been biased by their philosophical assumptions, but later philosophers have disentangled the conviction from the bias. Today, the new position is generally accepted except for some textbooks in metaphysics that still continue to state their "purely objective" and "absolutely cogent" arguments for the existence of God, convincing to the convinced and unconvincing to the unconvinced. Yet, one of our major difficulties with religion at present is that we have never become fully aware of this change and that we keep thinking of the religious act as purely objective.

Another important problem introduced by the first philosophers of religion is the specific character of religious symbols. If religion is not purely objective, its symbols must be different from those of object language. Kant's chapter on the schemata of the imagination contains the outline of a theory that could be developed far beyond the limits of objective discourse. No less interesting is Hegel's theory of religion as representation.

But the most important effect from the incorporation of religion into the totality of human experience is its secular character. Now, secularity for Collins is quite different from secularism which reduces the sacred entirely to the profane, to the point where there is no religion left. The interesting thing is that these thinkers who initiated the secularization process carefully avoided secularism.

In his final chapters, Collins summarizes the common issues of the early philosophers of religion and, on the basis of this foundation, attempts to show in which direction philosophy of religion could develop. Two important trends have since considerably enlarged the horizon of philosophy of religion—linguistic analysis and phenomenology. Yet, as methods by themselves they are insufficient to do full justice to the religious phenomenon. What is needed is a metaphysical structure which can integrate all these data into the totality of human experience. Professor Collins opts for a realistic metaphysics. Whether one agrees with his choice or not, it is definitely true that some integrational synthesis must be made if religion is fully to understand itself. Toward that understanding, Collins' study of the sources is a major contribution.

Divorce and Remarriage

VICTOR J. POSPISHIL

Herder & Herder, $4.95

CHARLES E. CURRAN

Divorce and Remarriage proposes the thesis that the Roman Catholic Church should change its present teaching on divorce. Unfortunately, some of the arguments advanced and the specific solution proposed appear to be inadequate. Monsignor Pospishil deserves praise and gratitude for undertaking such an important investigation, but the final result is disappointing. Pospishil's plight well illustrates the manifold competencies which are demanded of the contemporary ethician—a competence in scripture, history, sociology, law and ecclesiology. Unfortunately, Pospishil does not possess all of them.

His approach consists in presenting the facts involved and his interpretation of them. These facts fall under three categories which form the three major divisions of the book: divorce in the Bible; divorce in the history of the Church; divorce in contemporary life. Appendices of over sixty pages develop the historical aspect of the teaching on divorce, with special emphasis on the witness of the Fathers. Pospishil maintains that the proper interpretation of the facts hinges on the fundamental distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic indissolubility and on the realization that theologians "have assigned to the Church far too little power."

The first section considers divorce in the Bible. In the Old Testament the author examines only the two passages in Genesis and Deuteronomy 24:1-4. The New Testament analysis devotes seven pages to Mt. 19 and a paragraph each to 1 Cor. 7:11, Eph. 5:32, and Rom. 7:3. According to Pospishil, the key to interpreting the Scriptures is the distinction between intrinsic dissolubility (the spouses themselves can dissolve the bond) and extrinsic dissolubility (only an extrinsic authority such as God, the Church, or the State can dissolve the bond). Pospishil reads the Scriptures as denying intrinsic but not extrinsic dissolubility.

The presentation of the scriptural aspect of the question of divorce is inadequate. Pospishil appears to follow only one article, which was not even written by a recognized Scripture scholar. The controversy over the famous incisions in Mt. 5:32 and 19:9 receives less than a one-page explanation. The interpretation of Genesis involves an unacceptable fundamentalism; e.g., "when the words in Genesis were uttered there

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was only one pair of human beings and only one marriage in existence." The interpretation of intrinsic indissolubility and extrinsic dissolubility appears contrived and arbitrary. Pospishil had previously warned about reading into the Scriptures a meaning which the text would not support. Unfortunately, he imposes on the Scriptures a distinction which was frequently employed by later canonists.

A better interpretation of the scriptural teaching on divorce may be found in the more general interpretation of the gospel ethic of Jesus. The coming of Jesus marks the coming of the eschaton into history. The reign of God has already come but is still not yet fully present. The ideal ethic proposed by Jesus pertains to the presence of the last times, but an accommodation must be made to the "not yet" aspect of the reign of God. The ethical ideal proposed by Jesus indicates the goal and direction of Christian activity, but the pilgrim Christian will frequently have to settle for less than the ideal. The exceptions to indissoluble marriage mentioned by St. Paul shows that an accommodation to the needs of the actual times had already begun in the apostolic community.

The two incisions in Matthew may well be additions made by the early Church in adapting the gospel ideal to the concrete circumstances of the times. The accommodations made by the early Church would not necessarily be taxative but only indicative of other possible accommodations that could be made in other circumstances. Pospishil does briefly mention the interpretation based on an ethical ideal rather than a norm, but the key to his entire thesis is the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic dissolubility.

The major portion of the book treats the question of divorce in history. Here Pospishil makes his best efforts. Although most of the passages mentioned by the author have already been mentioned by previous scholars, Pospishil gives a different interpretation. Even the defenders of the present teaching of the Catholic Church admit a tendency favoring limited divorce among the Greek Fathers, which became the official teaching in the Greek Church after the sixth century. Apologists for the present teaching have also admitted that a few Latin Fathers after the third century accepted the possibility of divorce. Also, all acknowledge a relaxed discipline in the Latin Church in the sixth, seventh and eighth centuries, followed by a gradual hardening of the position against divorce. Pospishil denies the more benign interpretation that sees in the exceptions made by the Fathers, the penitentials and some synods a concession to the legal structures of the Roman Empire or a reluctant acceptance of the customs of the barbarians who were being absorbed gradually into the Church. Pospishil interprets the silence of the early Fathers of the Church and the later condemnation of divorce for the woman as an acceptance of the possibility of divorce and remarriage for the husband because of his wife's adultery. A brief treatment of the Councils, especially Trent, concludes that the magisterium has not definitely settled the question of divorce. The author concludes from his historical investigation that marriage is extrinsically dissoluble for Christians through the power of the Church.

The third section considers divorce and contemporary life. Statistical evidence (which to my amateur eye appears rather unscientific) shows the extent and gravity of the problem. The present Church law involves harsh consequences for the couple themselves and the children. Possible solutions, in a redefinition of consent, sacramentality and consummation are discussed but rejected as inadequate. The only real solution is the fact that the Church possesses the power of dissolving even consummated Christian marriages, The power of the keys, the power of binding and loosing given by Christ to his Church, includes the power to dissolve consummated Christian marriages. The author explains the *de facto* indissolubility of consummated Christian marriages as a decision of the Church not to exercise its power.

The solution of extrinsic dissolubility through the power of the keys is based on a very inadequate understanding of ecclesiology. Pospishil's notion of the power of binding and loosing appears to be an unwarranted extension of an older and now somewhat abandoned understanding of the terms "binding" and "loosing." Binding and loosing may only mean that the Church places someone outside the community and then brings him back within the community. Pospishil seems to picture the Church in a triumphalistic way, as an authoritative society given a power by God which the Church then distributes through privileges and dispensations. Canon lawyers and theologians no longer understand the Church according to such a model. Divorce is essentially a moral problem. The authoritative Church cannot issue a decree to make something right which is not right in itself. The Church cannot give a dispensation for something which in itself is wrong. At best, Pospishil's solution entails a paternalistic view of the Church. A solution based on the Church's realization that in certain circumstances the ideal proposed by Christ is no longer binding would obviate the ecclesiological problems inherent in the solution offered by Pospishil.

The Negro in New York

EDIT. ROI OTTLEY &
WILLIAM J. WEATHERBY

New York Public Library & Oceana, $6

HENRY J. BROWNE

Probably any scholar's first reaction to this book is, why hasn't it been edited up-to-date? Printed from manuscripts in the Schomberg Collection of the New York Public Library that were prepared by the Federal Writers Project in the '30s, its research and rhetoric are those of its era. Hence one feels the absence of perspective provided on the one hand by all of the last generation's upsurge of interest in Negro history—the scholarly Americanists' accompaniment to the civil rights movement—and on the other by the recent emphasis on urban history, a still nursling outgrowth of our awareness of the-city-as-problem.

Yet in its present state, even from a methodological point of view, this publication represents an intriguing document. It is basically a third "pre-final"

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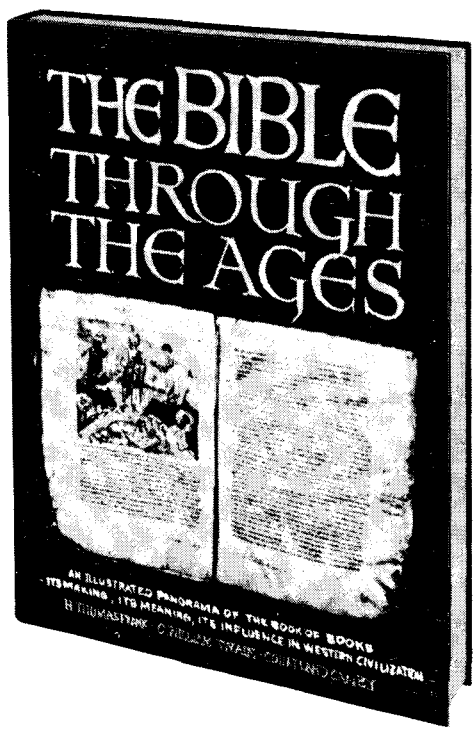
draft, with the kind of editorial comments and notations which dramatically demonstrate historiography in the laboratory stage. These in themselves might very easily be used by history classes or seminars for doing supplementary research or a study of historical writing. The well-known Negro writers' names in the original group are further testimony, meanwhile, of what is now seen as the considerable contribution of the federal excursion into the arts under the banner of the W.P.A.

At first, perhaps, the most surprising thing in the book is Jean Blackwell Hutson's statement in the foreword that publication of the manuscript had been prevented since 1940 "because information contained in it was too startling for conservative taste." But lest we be too inclined to boast the broadmindedness of our own day, we ought to note and wonder at the fact that it is neither a large commercial publisher, nor a university press, that has undertaken this publication.

This publishing history in itself provides an obvious (and negative) further commentary on the national experience related to the Negro. Likewise, James Baldwin's fine preface underscores the character of the recent past as epilogue, pointing as he does to the book's ironic concluding words: "Throughout his long American history, the Negro faith has been in the ultimate triumph of democracy. At no time has his goal been as visible as it is today." The evidence in the text also supports Baldwin's own conclusion that there has always been a Northern racial attitude fundamentally the same as that of the South. This excellent historical documentation does more than any other comparable work in demonstrating, at least for this reviewer, that the Negro himself has made the difference in his condition when by organization he has grasped financial and political power. It is an instructive truth.

Considering the danger to which a project like this was susceptible in the '30s, this history is notably free of polemic and, for a group undertaking, remarkably unified. It parades widely-known as well as only Negro-known



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characters of Harlem—its only real local focus—against a background of the life of the city and of the nation. Students of the Negro past and of the history of the city, and even social studies departments of secondary schools, should read it. Everyone who wants to know how it really is has to know how it really was. There is an almost clinically convincing tone about this story cast in refreshingly pre-civil rights language. What comes through with fine clarity is the length and depth of Negro involvement in the development of New York.

Readers will find here many of those future research avenues they hope someone will pursue. From a New York Catholic point of view there are such items as the role of the clergy and the black-hating archbishop in quelling the draft riots of 1863, the opening in 1883 of the Church of St. Benedict the Moor on West 53rd St. in the heart of the old Negro district, the East Harlem property speculations of Father James Power who was the pastor of All Saints parish for a generation after the 1880's, and the mass conversion movement under the reverend McCann brothers of the decades of the '20s and '30s.

It is, of course, to be regretted that, for whatever reasons, this volume was denied its rightful opportunity for impact when it was first produced. But it will serve us now, and provide the measure of its own durability, by giving insights still timely and significant.

The Spy in the Corporate Structure

EDWARD ENGBERG

World, $5.95

DAVID CORT

The great and mysterious subject of communication includes gossip, collecting information, spying, the census, the job questionnaire, the polygraph, etc., etc. Engberg's province is the whole area, but some editor must have told him that the electronic devices of industrial espionage are the really "hot" news. And so we get a prolonged opening on this line, to instant boredom. However, Engberg gets down to the real business soon enough.

His preoccupation is as broad and searching as this: "Paranoia appears to be a condition of survival against the competition of substantially unpredictable adversaries possessed of guile and energy . . . Certain expectations concerning the extent to which the adversary will *not* go . . . (are) requisite to a reduction of paranoia among competitors." If one man is especially tempted to stick at nothing, he will ascribe an even stronger temptation to his competitors. This morality is bad enough among governments and corporations, but its horror is that it is also turned on the private citizen by government and business. For an example (superficially innocuous, but think about it), the Federal Housing Administration collects "confidential" information on mortgage applicants' marital happiness, because divorce is a frequent cause of foreclosure. "Confidential" in quotation marks: the information is for sale to mortgage lenders.

This morality has existed in totalitarian states throughout history, but modern techniques, electronics, computers, income tax records and social security numbers have reduced the individual to a new point of impotence. In very important ways, he has lost control of his reputation. And the clerks who run these machines and the world are not in business to do him any good. Engberg calls this vast procedure "voyeurism" and asks whether there may be a correlation between this amputation of the citizen's sense of identity (meaning, I suppose, assurance of adult sovereignty) and the rise of homosexuality among males.

When large accusations are made against a society, I like to see examples and proofs, and Engberg gives them very fully, many infuriating but some hilariously farcical. He early raises the serious question whether the citizen is any longer entitled to privacy in an increasingly congested and complex and interdependent society. We have long since accepted the fact that the corporation is not entitled to the privacy (or secrecy) of the early Fuggers, Rothschilds, Morgans, et al. Must the individual citizen submit to a parallel surveillance, on the assumption that he too is a menace to the society if left to himself?

The matter has hardly been debated in responsible quarters, but the citizen in this democracy is already very largely caught in a net of subjection which is being progressively tightened by government, business and labor. The idea that the citizen needs a champion has not even occurred to the Establishment;

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the talk is of how to tighten the net. Here at last, alone, rides up Mr. Engberg; but it is nearly too late. The citizen is scarcely aware of what is happening. Consisting now of a social security number, a zip code number, and a few other numbers, he hardly casts a shadow in strong sunlight. His secrets are the property of clerks and he has been dismembered and dispersed as a single digit in a thousand statistics. Samson was not undone so subtly.

Sadly, I do not expect to see this book properly reviewed.

In his final chapter, Mr. Engberg makes a sensible proposal to government as to the proper way of handling the "private" records of the citizen's status and reputation, now open to his enemies but closed to him. Rather than summarize the proposal here, I invite patriots to get the book and read the full proposal for themselves. It represents a first step toward that long return by which the American can reclaim his name and reputation and become a man again.

Actually some insular sovereignty can even now be achieved by anybody who will do without telephone, automobile, social security number, zip code number, checking account, charge accounts, credit rating. The 8,000 tentacles of the giant octopus can hardly find such a citizen to deliver him up to the horny octopean beak. But most citizens would call this a prohibitive price to pay for privacy.

Where Do We Go From Here?

MARTIN LUTHER KING

Harper & Row, $4.95

DAVID STEINBERG

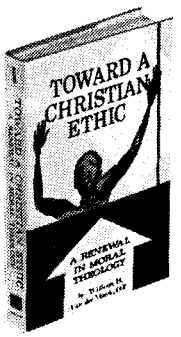
As the newspapers excitedly tell us, two groups have formed within the civil rights movement in the past year or two. One group, including the NAACP and the Urban League, attempts to deal with the issues that have been the heart of the movement for some time. Programs are developed with the confidence of those who work within long-familiar frameworks. The problems are seen as segregated schools, voting rolls closed to Negroes, responsibility abdicated by the federal government, lack of concern among whites. The programs follow directly from the problems: pressure for immediate integration, lobbying for federal legislation and enforcement, registration of Negroes to vote, appeals aimed at white consciences.

The second group, including organizations like SNCC and CORE, has recently defined an entirely new level for dealing with racial issues. This group is also confident, the confidence of those who feel that they have been fumbling along in a fog but have now come to see the light of truth. To this group, the problems are of a different nature entirely: Negroes are still basically powerless in a society run by the rules of power; economic and psychological intimidations often make it impossible for Negroes to register and vote freely, even when their legal rights are protected; Negroes have come to accept white stereotypes of Negro inferiority and in a very real sense hate, distrust and blame themselves; whites, in the final analysis, are unwilling to let Negroes stand equal to themselves in status, privilege and opportunity.

Attempting to deal with these problems, the second group arrives at programs dramatically different from those the society has come to accept: build separate black organizations strong enough to wield power effectively in the society at large; build a base of self-support to free Negroes from economic and psychological dependency on whites; develop black institutions and black leadership which demonstrate Negro competence and serve as a focus for group identity and pride; formulate strategies that do not depend on altruistic white support.

The gulf between these two approaches is not simply tactical. It is, more significantly, a difference in conception of the depth of racial problems in this country, of how much must be changed for the problems to be solved.

Where Do We Go From Here? makes it clear that while both groups proceed with great confidence, Martin Luther King has been thrown in the opposite



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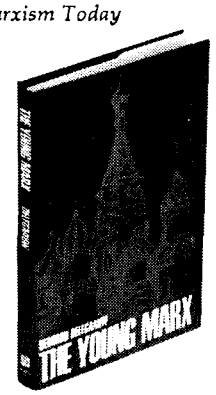

THE YOUNG MARX

by Bernard Delfgaauw

The central theme of this study is the humanism of the young Marx which developed into the driving force of the later Marx. ". . . will be of interest particularly to Catholic students at the university level and to intelligent laymen both for its clarity and its objectivity."
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direction, into great confusion and doubt. His perception and definition of the problems are clearly those of the second group, the so-called "black power advocates." The great bulk of his book emphasizes the importance of a long catalogue of "black power issues." King, however, carefully rejects close identification with this group. He seems to feel that he cannot accept many of the programs that are being developed along new approaches since these programs point away from universal non-violence, away from continued faith in immediate black-white cooperation, and most basically away from the ethic of universal love which has been the central pillar of King's social morality. What is a man to do when he feels he cannot morally accept the conclusions that seem to follow from his statement of the problem?

No wonder, then, that King's book seems to be groping for something which it never finds. King presents no feasible alternatives to the programs he rejects, and so we are left with the open question of whether his definition of the problem and his philosophy of action are compatible or contradictory.

In his book, King fills this opening with some rather thin rhetoric. Even his rejection of black power seems more rhetorical that real. After presenting a keenly perceptive outline of what black power is really getting at, King turns to standard stereotypes in his rejection of the concept. The apparent contradiction is overwhelming. King rejects what ten pages earlier he criticized as a straw man. It is as if he is misdefining black power in order to make it easier to reject.

His alternatives for action are equally rhetorical. Unsupported statements of faith that his philosophy is applicable to the problems he sees are followed by familiar appeals to Negroes to "stand firm, move forward nonviolently, accept disappointments and cling to hope." Without programmatic foundation, this sounds dangerously close to every mayor's plea for rioters to go home, be patient, and trust that it will all be taken care of, somehow. Coming from the spiritual leader of the movement, of course, these appeals are a good deal more significant than those of Mayor Yorty or Governor Hughes. But even the leader's call for "infinite hope" begins to wear thin when his tactics no longer bring about change. King sees this, which only increases the weight of his uncertainty. It is a dilemma well worth pondering.

ISSUES THAT DIVIDE THE CHURCH

Edited by Robert G. Hoyt
With an Introduction by Donald Thorman

Six leading representatives of differing schools of thought within the American Roman Catholic community frankly and uninhibitedly argue the controversial issues that are creating a major crisis in the American Catholic Church today—among them birth control, ecumenism, the meaning of infallibility, the limits of orthodoxy, the controversy over authority, Catholic education, liturgy and social action.

The participants: Daniel Callahan, Jacqueline Grennan, Archbishop Robert J. Dwyer, L. Brent Bozell, Father Andrew Greeley, and George N. Shuster. Robert Hoyt, editor of *The National Catholic Reporter,* adds an epilogue. $4.95
(paper, $1.45)

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The Difficulty of Being

JEAN COCTEAU

Coward-McCann, $4.50

BERNARD MURCHLAND

For decades, Jean Cocteau carried on as though he would in the end outwit life. But he knew as well as anyone else that this was an act, a diversion for his public and perhaps for himself as well. Cocteau was nothing if not the actor. But this little collection of meditations, written in 1946 when he was suffering from a painful skin disease, proves that he was more of a philosopher, with far fewer illusions about himself than is commonly thought. *The Difficulty of Being* is not an autobiography in any conventional sense of the word, but the record of a state of mind. The great names—Proust, Picasso, Gide or Nijinsky—are alluded to in passing, usually to illustrate a broader point.

I think we best catch his tonality in the chapter which occasions the title. Here Cocteau says, for example: "It must be a dream that one can live at ease in one's skin." He describes himself as an "ill-stowed cargo," and laments that he has never been trimmed, that he has knocked around too much. And then: "It is incredible how few traces are left in us of long periods which we had lived through in great detail." These are perceptive enough psychological remarks, applicable to anyone. But in the context of this book they function as a key to Cocteau's whole world vision. He has that peculiar post-Cartesian Gallic view of life as a slippery incline through the mists, a mixture of shadows and substance, where the boundary between dream and reality is never sharply drawn.

This, in my view, goes a long way toward explaining his lifelong interest in the arts, particularly the theater (and much of *The Difficulty of Being* is devoted to this general theme). Art is an escape from the flux; it imposes a semblance of order and makes life's odyssey more enjoyable if not more meaningful. Cocteau likes the cinema because it removes us "from the confines in which we have to live." He admires the new and anti-traditional in the theater because novelty makes it a medium of transformation rather than mere imitation. Anything that imitates life as it is is nauseous to him. The spotlight reveals another world of tricks, deception and magic. Beauty, in the final analysis, is a stratagem to distract us from the difficulty of being, a mode of awareness that is primarily beneficial to the artist himself. "A work of art," says Cocteau, "is so intensely the expression of our solitude that one wonders what strange necessity for making contact impels the artist to expose it to the light."

Insofar as art is an expression, it is basically an ethical projection: a medium in which meanings are conferred and identities constructed. Cocteau's heroes, like their creator, are in perpetual search

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of their destinies. The machine of the world beats cruelly and the way through the mists is fraught with enigmas and reversals. Still, the search must go on; the supernal ideal beckons; and hope is never quite washed out by tragedy. Cocteau's effectiveness as an artist was not so much his amazing and versatile productivity or near-genius for evoking atmosphere as his ability to dramatize mythic themes (Orpheus, Oedipus, Galahad) in a post-Freudian idiom. In his work the alienation of modern man is confronted, explored and aesthetically reconstructed.

But it is never overcome. The ultimate riddle of death proves intractable to the healing dialectic of magic and illusion. It would by no means be stretching our interpretation to say that the central theme of the body of Cocteau's work is death. An unlikely note of realism colors his reflections on this theme, something almost like stoic resignation. One marries death at birth and must make the best of what is at best a deceitful relationship. But the marriage gets more tolerable with time. Cocteau's assessment is touching: "The shorter I get, the longer she grows. The more she makes herself at home. The more she bestirs herself about this and that. The more she devotes herself to trivial details. Less and less does she take the trouble to deceive me." When Cocteau wrote this book he seems to have thought death imminent, even desirable. This would account for his generally morbid and despondent tone. Color, light and sometimes humor flash out when he is talking about what can be aesthetically manipulated. But darkness falls when he faces the harsh realities of things. The world as it is is at bottom a vicious place. One must dance at a frenzied pitch to escape the slings and arrows.

From this point of view, Cocteau illustrates the plight of the modern artist who for a long time now has been in search of a suitable self-image. One of his principal difficulties is how to relate to nonartistic forces and impositions. In other ages, the artist could easily gain a foothold in social realities. But since the advent of the acquisitive society, with its institutional autonomy and social pluralism, this foothold is hard to find. As Erich Kahler has said, the artist is obliged to penetrate and comprehend so many social complexities that he must develop his own kind of abstraction which alienates him from the human community. He too must opt for a variety of subjectivism (which is ever the portal to the dungeon of solipsism) in order to safeguard the validity of his undertaking.

An important reason for this is that the underlying assumptions of our contemporary self-images remain essentially Cartesian or, better, Kantian. Having cut ourselves off from reality we can make a comeback only volitionally. We must *will* our way out of our several dilemmas. That this way can easily lead to the land of sterile ideologies, political tyrannies and social fragmentation is by now obvious. But how deal with the monsters begotten of our misguided attempts?

Only three choices seem possible: either we can live with them or we can escape them by seeking refuge in some hastily constructed Xanadu or, finally, we can move on to radically rethink our situation and come up with fresh, revolutionary ideas to break the spell. The latter in the long run is the only effective solution. The former, of course, is intolerable. Most of us, including the artist, fashion a sheltering dream world which we then proceed to furnish with the palliatives required by existence. Cocteau has no answer to the difficulty of being but he distracted us from its pains ingeniously.

The Imagination's New Beginning

FREDERICK J. HOFFMAN

University of Notre Dame Press, $3.25

MELVIN J. FRIEDMAN

The Imagination's New Beginning is a more hopeful title than that of Hoffman's major book of 1964, *The Mortal No.* Both titles are taken from the eighth part of Wallace Stevens' *Esthétique du Mal*—which in turn is probably a composite of two Baudelaire titles, *Curiosités esthétiques* and *Les Fleurs du Mal.* Hoffman has been preoccupied for some time with the uses of the Symbolist aesthetic from Baudelaire through Wallace Stevens, and

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by CHARLES DAVIS

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it has offered him a series of striking metaphors, such as Baudelaire's image of the abyss and Yeats' and Eliot's views of the Incarnation, which have helped him explain the theological tensions and disproportions of modern literature.

Hoffman tells us in his preface that the present book is meant to follow his *Samuel Beckett: The Language of Self* and *The Mortal No*. And indeed they seem almost composed to resemble a triptych, with the slender side panels (*Samuel Beckett* and *The Imagination's New Beginning*) flanking the imposing center panel (*The Mortal No*). The subject matter also goes well with our notion of the triptych—traditionally used as an altarpiece in a church. For Frederick Hoffman's work of the past five years has been connected with the literary side of the new ambience discussed in such works as Ved Mehta's *The New Theologian;* he has joined Nathan Scott, Maurice Friedman, Gabriel Vahanian, and others in suggesting a new kind of secularization of the religious experience in literature.

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In *The Mortal No,* Hoffman set up the paradoxes of "secular grace," the spatialization of time, and the merging of the "assailant" and "victim." He also devoted some brilliant pages to the literature of war, of concentration camps, and of "violence" in general; he chronicled a literary "Inferno" of vast proportions. In *The Imagination's New Beginning,* with its more optimistic title, the concern is with a more "purgatorial" literary condition. Hoffman quotes to great advantage Beckett's view of Joyce's world as being purgatorial, with its "absolute absence of the Absolute." This expression has come back to haunt a decisive segment of modern literature. Many of the writers faced with this dilemma have tried to find a rhetoric suited to their literary needs, one, according to Hoffman, "that will stand satisfactorily in the place of reality."

The four sections which compose *The Imagination's New Beginning* look at different responses to the purgatorial. The first offers a series of definitions and glances briefly at images of the Incarnation in modern poetry from Baudelaire through Stevens, passing by Yeats and Eliot. The second concentrates on Joyce's Stephen Dedalus and his search for a rhetoric. We are told, for example, that ". . . the principal importance of Joyce's artist as a young man is stylistic." The third chapter is mainly concerned with two "friends of God," Dostoevsky and Kazantzakis, and their wrestling with the Christian myth. *The Idiot* and *The Last Temptation of Christ* are the touchstones used to illustrate the types of Christ figures in modern literature. The fourth section makes certain judgments about the American scene and examines two rather unlikely bedfellows, Henry Adams' *Mont-Saint-Michel and Chartres* and Faulkner's *A Fable*—which belong together in the way that they offer "a nostalgic view of a religious past."

The "texts" Hoffman chooses to illustrate the types of religious imbalance are remarkably varied. He dwells on Holbein's painting of Christ in the tomb when discussing *The Idiot*: "Ultimately the meaning of *The Idiot* comes down to the Holbein painting." He brings together Henry Adams' nostalgic itineraries into the twelfth and thirteenth centuries with a Faulkner novel set during the first World War. He uses works of painting and architecture to illumine novels. His criticism is in short a splendid working out of an aspect of Malraux' famous theory of the museum without walls. By bringing together works of disparate origins and styles new truths about the artistic and cultural process are uncovered. But the juxtaposition is never determined by chronology or genre; it is a matter of sensibility and taste.

The Imagination's New Beginning abounds in sober judgments and tasteful responses to the artistic experience. "*The Idiot* is one of the great works in the modern history of religious doubt." "The *Portrait* is the record of a succession of experiences and the search for appropriate rhetorics." And so on.

The one caution I can offer is that the present book be read only after *The Mortal No*. Reversing the process would be quite as wrongheaded as reading *Ulysses* before *A Portrait of the Artist* or *The Past Recaptured* before *Swann's Way*. Hoffman probably intended *The*

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REVIEWERS

STEPHEN ZOLL has contributed to *The Nation, Dissent* and the *Village Voice.*

MICHAEL ZEIK teaches in the Oriental Studies Department at Marymount College in Tarrytown, N.Y.

LOUIS DUPRÉ is professor of philosophy at Georgetown University and the author of *Contraception and Catholics.*

FATHER CHARLES E. CURRAN teaches in the Department of Theology at Catholic University in Washington.

FATHER HENRY J. BROWNE is chairman of the Strycker's Bay Community Action Project, a program sponsored by the Office of Economic Opportunity in New York City.

DAVID CORT is the author of *The Glossy Rats* (Grosset & Dunlap).

DAVID STEINBERG is on the staff of the United States National Student Association.

BERNARD MURCHLAND is the editor of *The Meaning of the Death of God* (Random House).

MELVIN J. FRIEDMAN is co-editor of *The Added Dimension: The Art and Mind of Flannery O'Connor.*

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Imagination's New Beginning as a lengthy appendix to *The Mortal No* and as a more affirmative view of the modern literary imagination. We must remember that "the mortal no" is followed in Stevens' poem by "Has its emptiness and tragic expirations," while "the imagination's new beginning" is followed by the more encouraging "In the yes of the realist spoken because he must/ Say yes. . . ."

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 193)

ex machina to rescue us from our predicament in Vietnam. We are responsible for the carnage there. Only we can end it. Every American male between 18 and 35 is required to possess a draft card and classification notice (this includes clergy, veterans, etc.). The penalty for non-compliance is five years' imprisonment and a $10,000 fine. The same penalty is prescribed for anyone who aids or abets someone resisting the draft. Thus everyone has an opportunity for civil disobedience.

The government may act quickly to smash the first wave of Resistance. F.B.I. agents began massive investigations in the Boston area immediately after the cards were given to the Justice Department on Oct. 20. But whether the government acts now or not, a second wave of Resistance will go off on 16 November in Boston and 4 December elsewhere in the nation. Some of you may find it possible to join us, either directly or as a member of support groups like RESIST or CONSCIENTIOUS RESISTANCE. You would be most welcome. PAUL GARVER

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Crime in the Streets

Newark, N.J.

To the Editors: One can only advise John Leo ("The Great Juggling Act" Oct. 6) to get the hell into the streets and see what is really happening . . . The question is, "is there much crime in the street"? Almost anyone in his right mind would answer in the affirmative, but not Leo. He has to conjure up, even to the point of absurdity, justifications and supports for his thesis that things are not bad, and crime is not an especially great problem.

It may be that I am only over-reacting to recent events and can't project an image of detached superiority. You see, my apartment was recently robbed, so was my immediate neighbor's (imagine walking in on the thief), and my wife was mugged not too long ago (on the street). Funny enough, each dastardly deed was perpetrated by a complete stranger(s)! My friends' anti-social behavioral tendencies have not as of yet surfaced. Perhaps if they did surface, Leo would counsel that their crimes would be less serious than those of the complete stranger.

While I am not calling for some type of crusade against anyone, it would be nice if liberals tried to call things as they are in reality, and without the nauseating and absurd justifications proffered by the ideologue. One can still be a true liberal even if he doesn't buy the whole package or litany dreamed up by some so-called liberals. MARK M. FERRARA

The eagle and doves illustration on the Nov. 10 *Commonweal* front cover was from the book *A Crocodile Has Me by the Leg: African Poems*, edited by Leonard W. Doob and illustrated by Solomon Irein Wangboje (Walker).

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